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The Week

ALMOST in a day, the supposedly solid foundations of Poincaré's house have begun to crumble. As the committees of the Reparations Commission begin their investigations of German finances and of funds of German citizens abroad, the franc again sinks to a new low level for all time—an event which is regarded in France as little less than a catastrophe, and one which has diverted the public attention from all other questions. Dissatisfaction with what Poincaré has achieved is so great that he may be forced to permit a much wider scope to the inquiries than he has heretofore consented to. Edouard Herriot, Radical Socialist leader, attacks the government's policy in the Chamber in frankly bitter terms which would have been impossible six months ago. It is generally agreed that the Bloc National will suffer heavy losses in the coming election. This is especially likely if its date is moved forward from the latter part of April to March, since the parties of the Left are well organized and ready to take the field at any moment, which is not true of the Poincaré group. No alteration of the Chamber can take place which will greatly modify the French policy toward Germany; yet in the long run the present position of France in European affairs as a whole must suffer profound modification as the result of the forces which are now beginning to manifest themselves.

AMONG the things on M. Poincaré's list of troubles may be placed the conference of the Little Entente which has just closed at Belgrade. Despite a rigorous censorship, it is clear that Italy and Jugoslavia have come to an understanding. The Fiume question has been settled by dividing the territory between the two countries but setting up a joint commission which will operate the port as an entity. The next step, clearly, is an alliance between the two powers, which may be announced at almost any time. It is true that they have rival ambitions; but Mussolini, seeking to make his position as strong as possible, in view of growing hostility between Italy and France, can well afford to make peace for the present with his eastern neighbor. There are to be no new treaties between France and Rumania, France and Jugoslavia. Beneš has gone to London to make an agreement with Great Britain similar, it is said, to that recently arranged between Czecho-Slovakia and France, which caused so much adverse comment in the other European capitals. Thereafter he will go to Rome to do the same with Italy. Here are four facts highly displeasing to the Quai d'Orsay. Plainly, the Little Entente is beginning to feel strong enough to have a policy of its own.

A REAL menace to French policy is to be found in the threat of a "Pan-Slavic federation" of which something is beginning to be heard. Three-quarters of the population of the Little Entente are of Slavic origin, and therefore sympathetically inclined toward Russia, even though not in accord with the Soviet government. Rumania has settled the Bessarabian controversy and, though still squabbling over technicalities, is quite willing to strike hands with Moscow. Czecho-Slovakia and Jugoslavia are both on the whole friendly. Poland, which has long been flirting with the idea of joining the Little Entente, has given Russia complete recognition. A Pan-Slavic movement has been prevented up to now because France has stood as guardian of the Versailles Treaty, which is the

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Magna Charta of the Little Entente's liberties. If the French financial collapse goes far enough in destroying her prestige, aided by the open hostility of the Labor government in England and Mussolini's régime at Rome, an entirely new alignment of forces, on ethnographical lines, is not impossible. The Slavic group would then be centred at Moscow. Italy and Spain, the Latin Catholic countries, would unite in pursuit of their common interests on the shores of the Mediterranean. The Teutonic elements in Austria, Czecho-Slovakia and Poland would look, culturally if not politically, toward Berlin. England and America are already referred to on the continent as the Anglo-Saxon bloc. Such a regrouping may be a long time coming, or may never come; but it has enough promise of reality to give M. Poincaré some unhappy moments.

BEFORE this issue of The New Republic is in the hands of its readers, a Labor government may have taken up the reins in Great Britain, for the first time in history. To the obvious difficulties with which Mr. MacDonald will be confronted must be added two of recent origin—the threatened railway and mine strikes, and Lord Curzon's imbroglio with France over the German Palatinate. Fifty-eight thousand railway engineers and firemen have rejected the new wage scale which cuts their pay by sums ranging from nine to twenty-two shillings a week. They hold that the award of the National Wages Board is not necessarily binding, while the companies argue that it is. The miners are also planning to upset the existing wage agreements. They are balloting on a proposal for cancellation three months hence, with affirmative action practically assured. Meanwhile, Lord Curzon seems almost determined to leave the MacDonald government in as much trouble as possible over the Palatinate. The French-made Separatist government there has applied to the Rhineland High Commission for registration of its decrees. Paris insists that this action be taken, and Curzon, refusing, has first threatened to invoke action by the League of Nations and has subsequently ordered the British consul at Munich to make an investigation on the spot—additional point being given to such a study by the disorders last week in the course of which "President" Heintz and half a dozen of his followers were shot down. Hardly ever, even in recent history, has a government been inaugurated with more pressing problems than the MacDonald group confronts.

FRENCH business men are grumbling because the Bank of France has advanced the discount rate from five to five and one half percent. They say there is no reason for the advance. There may be no reason according to the peculiar logic that befogs financial progress. The best of economic reasons, however, could be brought forward to defend even a much greater advance in the rate on loans. For the last twelve months the franc has been depreciating, roughly, two and one half percent a month. The lender who gets his money back after thirty days, even though he receives interest at the rate of six percent per annum, has lost two percent on his capital. The rate on loans should have been, not five nor five and one half percent, but thirty percent. That is what it should be today, unless the decline in the franc has been checked, which is highly improbable. Any rate less than this is an engine by which the debtor is enabled lawfully to rob his creditor. If the financial authorities ever get this simple principle into their heads, and act upon it, governments will walk less cheerfully along the road of inflation.

AN extraordinary instance of use of the machinery of justice in influencing an industrial dispute has recently come to light in Arkansas. For nearly three years a strike has been in operation against the Missouri and North Arkansas Railroad, in that state. About a year ago, a Citizens' Committee at Harrison, Arkansas, went on the rampage, attacked the houses of strikers, drove a number of them and their families out of town, and lynched one of their number, E. C. Gregor. Next day, with, according to the American Civil Liberties Union, "a threatening mob surging around the Harrison Court House," two other strikers, Vurlen Orr and Luther Wise, were brought to trial on a charge of sabotage. To save themselves from the same mob which on the preceding day lynched Gregor, they pleaded guilty, and were sentenced to prison terms of seven to ten years each.

THESE circumstances were sufficiently unusual, to say the least; but still more remarkable were the terms on which Governor Thomas C. McCrae released Orr and Wise on December 21 last. The railroad strike has at last been settled, and these two men have been set free on "furlough" *provided* all the terms of the agreement between the striking employees and the railroad are observed. If this happens, the two men will get full pardons at the end of one year from the date on which they were sentenced. If the terms of the agreement are violated in the meantime, they must go back to jail. In other words, the state is entirely ignoring the question whether or not these men were guilty. It is seeking to enforce the strike settlement for the railroad by holding them as hostages. The incident might well embarrass those idealistic Fourth of July orators who insist that there is no class struggle in America and that if there is the regularly constituted authorities are benevolently neutral in it.

ONE wonders with what emotions the Supreme Court Justices who overthrew the child labor law

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read the testimony the other day before the New York State Child Welfare Commission as to conditions in the "home industries" in New York City. At the hearing, witnesses testified that large numbers of children under ten years old, and some of them as young as three or four years, are employed in the manufacture of artificial flowers, in embroidery work, garment making and other tenement occupations. School teachers testified that "it is easy to tell which children work at home. They go to sleep at school and have marks on their hands." Investigators reported that the tenements in which the work is done are dark, dirty and insanitary. Persons engaged in this occupation are frequently sufferers from communicable, and sometimes from loathsome, diseases. Typical of the wages and hours is the case of Louisa Duchon, who has seven children, works all day and until ten or eleven each night, and manages to earn ten dollars a week. Mrs. Duchon beads dresses, two days to a dress, three dollars each. The artificial June roses which appear in the Fifth Avenue shops are made by the baby fingers of Italian children, who are paid twenty cents a gross. The plea is often made that this home work is the refuge of the bereft widow, but only ten percent of those employed in it come under that category. At the hearing appeared one Jacob De Young, representing The Associated Home Industries, protesting against any interference with the delightful circumstances of this most charming trade.

MAGNUS JOHNSON must have been born under a lucky star. In his business as tribune of the people he needs enmities as well as friendships, particularly plutocratic enmities. At Philadelphia on January 10 he got proof of them that he can use to advantage for the rest of his political days. More than 700 prominent bankers, representing $2,000,000,000 in resources, stood up and hissed him for fully three minutes when he declared that the Mellon tax plan would fail because it favored the rich. The voters of Minnesota will hear of that, and most of them will draw the moral Magnus Johnson would wish them to draw. It is an interesting question in psychology what the bankers thought they were accomplishing by this demonstration. No goose in history has ever saved its down by hissing.

AS Chinese bandits kill one American missionary, kidnap another, and dangerously wound a third, Dr. Sun Yat Sen, head of the Canton government, asks the United States to use its good offices in bringing about a conference of the warring elements to the end that peace may be restored in his country. Such action by our government could do either the United States or China no harm; but that substantial amelioration of conditions could be brought about through a conference seems most unlikely. Neither the Canton nor the Peking government has any real prestige other than that secured by force of arms, in China today. Power rests in the hands of the military war lords, who rule by force, and will consent to no action for their country's welfare which interferes in any degree with the strength of their position. Even Dr. Sun, sincere patriot though he undoubtedly is, would probably hesitate to enter a conference which seemed likely to whittle away any of his own prestige. It is foolish to look at Chinese conditions through American glasses, or to ignore the fact that Western institutions of political democracy require a point of view and a state of education which are at present impossible in the Orient.

NEW YORK CITY newspapers announced the other day with glee that plans for a new subway on Manhattan Island have finally been settled and that the end of the appalling congestion on the existing lines is therefore in sight. Such a notion is, of course, absurd. New York's rate of growth is about 200,000 a year. The metropolitan area is expanding in every possible direction; and if by the development of new transit facilities any one section is made temporarily easier of access than the others, it will automatically and rapidly fill up until congestion on the traffic lines serving it becomes as bad as it is elsewhere. For many miles in every direction, speculators long ago discounted the growth of the city's population for years to come, by raising the price of land. As a result, the overwhelming majority of the city's millions are forced by economic pressure to remain in the closely congested tenements on Manhattan Island. Under these conditions additional subway lines are not a solution of the problem. In the long run they actually aggravate the disease.

CONGESTION is further complicated, not only in New York but in many other cities by the lawless way in which the authorities permit new sky-scraping office buildings to be erected without consideration for the traffic problems they create. In New York, for example, plans have recently been authorized for two enormous structures of this sort, one near the tip of the island and the other at about its geographical centre. In both cases, these buildings are erected on subway lines which are already very near the absolute physical limit of capacity at the rush hours. How the additional thousands of workers who are to be housed in the new buildings are to pack themselves into the overcrowded trains and street cars, is a matter to which, in our blithe and easy-going American way, no one gives the slightest consideration. In a really intelligent civilization, the erection of a new building would be regarded as first of all an engineering problem to be worked out in its relation to the whole community. In New York, for example, every

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engineer knows that more building in the Wall Street district is the rankest folly. What the city needs is several subsidiary manufacturing and business districts at points in Brooklyn, the Bronx and the northern end of Manhattan. Not only should growth of the population of the island be prevented but the number should be reduced. However, this degree of interference with the sacred law of "private enterprise" still seems to most Americans altogether monstrous. The best interests of New York (as distinguished from the best interests of real estate speculators whose profit increases as the madhouse grows worse) must wait upon some such good fortune as the development of the St. Lawrence Canal project, which may reduce the population of the metropolis by a million or two.

The Supreme Court on Economic Surplus

IN the recent case involving the government's right to recapture railway earnings when these are in excess of six percent, Mr. Chief Justice Taft delivered an opinion on January 7, 1924, which constitutes a most important contribution to economic liberalism. Professor John R. Commons in his new book, Legal Foundations of Capitalism, remarks that the Supreme Court of the United States "occupies the unique position of the first authoritative faculty of political economy in the world's history." What this court says about property and about value has a significance which is immeasurably greater than the utterances of any individual or of any school of thought.

The case arose out of that paragraph of the Transportation Act providing for the payment by the railroad to the government of one-half its earnings in excess of six percent on the value of its property. In the opinion of many people, and especially of the railroads, such a provision violated the right of private property. The income which the carrier received was collected under rates which had been pronounced just and reasonable by public authority. It seemed clear, therefore, that the revenues of the railroads were their property; and that any taking of the money thus collected, under the recapture clause of the Transportation Act was a plain appropriation of property without any compensation. The Fifth Amendment to the Constitution clearly prohibits such a taking of property.

The Court disposes of this argument in unmistakable terms. "The statute declares the carrier to be only a trustee for the excess over a fair return received by it. Though in its possession, the excess never becomes its property and it accepts custody of the product of all the rates with this understanding. It is clear, therefore, that the carrier never has such a title to the excess as to render the recapture of it by the government a taking without due process." It thus appears that the right of property in the money received as revenue by a public utility corporation may be limited by legislative action to a standardized return. In the case of railroads six percent has been fixed as a fair return. In actual practice some railroads make eight or ten percent on their reported value. Other industries make profits which average higher than this. But Congress has declared that six percent is a fair profit. The Supreme Court holds that the carrier never has title to the excess, but receives it and holds it only as trustee.

The possibilities of the principle thus laid down are far-reaching. If the State of Pennsylvania declares anthracite coal a public utility and its legislature fixes eight percent as a fair return upon the value of the property in anthracite mines, it would seem clear that under this decision the companies would never receive title to the excess earnings over eight percent. And what if Congress should declare banking a public utility? The rates which banks may charge for their loans are subject to a considerable degree of legal control. Their accounts are subject to examination, and their operations are already regulated by government in many respects. It would be a short step to bring them under the category of public utility concerns. If this were done and if eight percent were fixed as a fair return, the banks would hold their excess earnings as trustees merely. And why should not gasoline be considered a public utility? Then after allowing the Standard Oil Company eight percent on its investment it would hold the rest of its earnings as trustee for the government.

There can no longer be any question, after this decision, that the power to regulate public utility rates is essentially and fundamentally the power to delimit the right of private property in public utility enterprises. The chief function of property is to yield its owner an income without personal effort, or to increase the income which he would make from his personal efforts unaided by property. If his property consists of public utility plant, the legislature may limit that function to a standardized return of six percent on the value of its property.

The other point in the decision which is of particular interest to the economic philosopher is that portion of the opinion in which it is held that a rate may be just to the shipper and yet may give an unreasonably high return to the railroads. It was urged that if the return which the railroad gets is more than a fair return it belongs to the shippers and should be returned to them; the government has no right to the excess. This position was in conformity with the universally accepted principle that prices which are fair to the buyers of goods and services distribute the national income equit-

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ably among the producers. Under this theory the very existence of excess profits would seem to prove that rates and prices were too high. This consideration was urged in the recapture case. The first answer of the Court was technical and held that if this objection were valid the carrier could not be heard to make it. It would be soon enough to consider such a claim when made by the shipper.

But the Court held that the objection was not valid. The rates which the carrier charged were reasonable from the standpoint of the shipper, though their net product furnished more than a fair return for the carrier. "The excess caused by the discrepancy between the standard of reasonableness for the shipper and that for the carrier due to the necessity of maintaining uniform rates to be charged the shippers, may properly be appropriated by the government for public purposes because the appropriation takes away nothing which equitably belongs either to the shipper or to the carrier."

It is clear from this statement that there is no common denominator for a reasonable rate to the shipper and a reasonable return to the carrier for the use of his property. A rate which is entirely fair and reasonable to the shipper may yield an unreasonably high return to the carrier. And if this holds for rates fixed by public authority, why does not the same principle apply to prices which are fixed by competition? Certainly for monopoly prices the case would seem crystal clear.

As the Court points out in the last passage quoted, reasonableness in the rates requires that uniformity be maintained. But under uniform rates and charges certain roads which are favorably located with respect to distance between principal points of traffic origin and destination, with respect to physical conformation, or traffic density, will make far more than a reasonable return. It is not permissible to allow the road which is more favorably situated to charge a different schedule of rates from the others. To do so would produce a congestion of traffic on the profitable lines and an inadequate utilization of the others. It would also put shippers on the weaker lines at a disadvantage when they were selling in competition with those on stronger lines where rates were lower. Hence the necessity for uniformity.

It is the familiar case of the law of single price in economics. Unless we charge the same price to all would-be consumers of a finished product, we have no way of selecting those who desire the product most. We now select them by allowing them to bid for the product and by making one price to all. If the person who desired the commodity only half as much had his price reduced fifty percent on that account, it is obvious that price would no longer function selectively. Just so with raw materials, with labor, and with capital. The price is uniform to all would-be purchasers. Those who can utilize these resources of production most successfully in the pursuit of profits bid highest for them. The price which is finally established by this process of competition is the same for all purchasers; and he who cannot afford the going price must ultimately abandon the field of productive enterprise. The banker does not reduce the rate of interest on capital because the lender cannot make profits sufficient to pay the going rate for money. The going rate is a single rate established by competition, and each would-be borrower may take it or leave it.

Just as some people cannot afford to pay the going price for the factors of production, so others could well afford to pay more. But the law of single price absolves the latter from this necessity. The result is a profit to those persons far above what is necessary to keep them in the field as producers. These surpluses exist everywhere in the economic structure. Rent is the most obvious case and the one first recognized by economists. But we know now that surplus profits exist in all lines of industry. In the year ended June 30, 1923, the average earnings of all national banks in the United States amounted to 8.48 percent upon their capital and surplus. In a great number of districts the combined national banks actually showed a net loss. But the national banks of Birmingham, Alabama, earned 23.45 percent on capital and surplus. In the year 1921 the net income of all manufacturing corporations combined was reduced to practically nothing by the depression which struck industry that year. Yet in the printing and publishing business 8,432 corporations made an average of over twenty-four percent; while 3,046 corporations engaged in the same line of industry suffered deficits totaling $26,679,985. This diversity in earnings among competitors who paid the same price for the factors of production and received a uniform price for their product exists throughout the industrial structure. The large rewards which thus fall to certain individuals and establishments are tolerated because of the beneficent effects which flow from the competitive situation kept alive by the law of single price. Thus far society has evolved no other selective process as efficient as competition.

This by-product of differential profits arising out of the working of these factors has repeatedly been subjected to critical scrutiny by economists. One of the first results of this analysis was the single tax movement. Two decades ago Henry Carter Adams proposed for the railroads what the Supreme Court has now upheld. J. A. Hobson, in his stimulating book, The Industrial System, worked out a comprehensive theory of economic surpluses for the whole industrial structure.

All economic investigation leads to the conclusion that these economic surpluses are largely unnecessary. The economic power which they rep-

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resent would function more desirably if it found its way into other hands. The obvious destination for such surpluses is the government treasury. Since government must be supported it seems desirable that its revenues should be drawn, as far as possible, from just such fortuitous profits as are represented by the excess over a fair return. But until the present decision there was no legal principle of the court upon which these earnings could be appropriated. The government could take them only under its taxing power. Under the stress of war the government actually took $7,000,000,000 of these differential earnings in excess profits taxes during the five years 1917 to 1921. The position which the Supreme Court has now taken gives the necessary legal foundation for the appropriation of surplus profits. The decision in this case will long remain the corner-stone for liberal economic legislation.

The Bok Plan—Education or Propaganda?

PRESS reports from Washington are gloomy about the prospects for endorsement by the Senate of the proposed entrance by the United States into the World Court. They declare that the announcement of the winning Bok peace plan has actually injured the chances of favorable action by the Senate. It has convinced hesitating Senators that the proposal to enter the World Court is merely the beginning of an advance by the United States towards the League of Nations which will end in full-fledged membership. Those of them who are obsessed by memories of 1919 are becoming apprehensive and are disposed to block the advance before it gets started. In consequence the anti-League of Nations addicts have emerged from their temporary silence and have renewed their irreconcilable battle against the assumption of any further responsibilities for the peace of Europe. They accuse the promoters and the jury of the Bok peace plan of a conspiracy to push the United States into the League of Nations through a side entrance which is labelled, let us say, Purgatory instead of either Paradise or Hell. If any consummation so deplorable is to happen, it will be over their dead bodies.

There is no need of discussing seriously this last accusation. The Bok competition was not a conspiracy on behalf of any one program of coöperation with Europe. Of course it assumed the desirability of such coöperation, and in that sense it was certain to result in the selection of a plan which would be obnoxious to the irreconcilables. But the jury which is responsible for the selection is composed of people whose good faith is indisputable. The idea that they would lend themselves to the carrying out of a pre-arranged verdict is fantastic. No less fantastic is the idea that the men and women who prepared the program of the competition cherished any shady ulterior purpose. They were, according to their lights, eliciting the best thought of the country on the subject. The idea which gave form to the competition was sound, and it was up to a certain point not only honestly but intelligently carried out.

Now, however, that the plan is selected and it is being referred to popular vote, the way in which it is submitted to American public opinion is, we believe, open to serious objections. There were in general two possible ways of interesting the American public in the successful plan. One way was to use it as the basis for an educational popular discussion of the part which the United States could and should play in the organization of world peace. The other way was to assume that the selected plan had some peculiar virtue in itself, independent of the amount of understanding which it might be used to evoke among the American people, and to labor, consequently, to get them to accept it no matter whether they understood it or not.

Unfortunately Mr. Bok or his advisers preferred the second way. The referendum is being managed as a vehicle of propaganda in favor of the plan. The American people are not being encouraged to examine it, to ventilate it and to test it out. They are being encouraged to swallow it whole before submitting it to disinterested or thorough-going scrutiny. Because the campaign in its favor has assumed the form almost entirely of propaganda, it was bound to provoke a counter-propaganda which would make up in violence what it lacked in volume.

The Bok peace plan is not an official proposal. Unlike an official proposal it is not something to be accepted or rejected. It does not derive its title to consideration from the solicitation of political leadership or from the pressure of circumstances which cannot be ignored. It can survive only by virtue of the interest, the understanding and the conviction which it arouses in public opinion. But in that event it should be presented to the American people, less as an idea which they must reckon with even if they don't understand, than as an idea which they cannot properly reckon with unless they discuss and understand. Any referendum upon it should, consequently, have been preceded by a period of discussion, and the utmost ingenuity should have been used and every precaution adopted to make the discussion as far as possible general, thorough and disinterested.

To that end it would have been well to have selected another plan along different lines which the jury could have approved as the second best bet, and to offer to the public a choice between them. A positive alternative is always a stimulus to con-

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structive discussion. Or if this method looked dangerously distracting, there were many ways to have subordinated the final yes or no decision to an introductory educational debate. With the assistance of local organizations of various kinds, forums could have been arranged all over the country. A syllabus could have been prepared which would help the debaters to obtain information about the plan and supply them with a chart of its surrounding geography. The syllabus could have provoked people to examine how the plan differed from the Covenant of the League, what the significance of the differences was, what kind of protection against war the modified League would offer, and what were the advantages and disadvantages, the dangers and safeguards of the proposed highway to world peace.

As a matter of fact, however, every effort is being made to obtain a particular decision rather than a liberating discussion; and as a consequence of this management the future usefulness of the plan is gravely compromised. Even good democrats, such as are the great majority of the people who advocate American participation in the League of Nations, have small faith in democracy as education as contrasted with democracy as the servant of some particular doctrine or policy. They attach far more importance to the formal adherence of the American government to the League of Nations than they do to the quality of popular choice and understanding which the adherence would express.

Yet if the Covenant of the League of Nations were modified as the Bok plan proposes, the future process of appeasement would become almost entirely a matter of the quality and the firmness of popular opinion and conviction with respect to war and peace. Its success would depend upon the ability of public opinion to discriminate wisely and steadily between conflicting claims on its support. The Bok peace plan offered a rare and handsome opportunity to start processes which would tend to invigorate public opinion with respect to the problems of peace and war, but as it is being promoted, this opportunity is not being turned to good account. The current referendum will, in all probability, merely sharpen the conflict between those who wish the United States to enter the League without qualifications and those who wish to exclude it without qualification.

Intervention: An Accomplished Fact

IT would be folly to deceive ourselves as to the meaning of what has happened between the United States and Mexico. Intervention is now an accomplished fact. Whether you like it or not, we have committed ourselves, as completely as we can ever be committed, to an active interference in the internal affairs of our southern neighbor. American guns and ammunition are now being used against the de la Huerta forces. Every effort is being made by our government to prevent the latter from securing war munitions of their own. From such a policy it is only a short step to the use of American troops in support of the Obregon régime. Indeed, if the federal government is unable in the next few months to put down the revolution, the pressure to send American soldiers will become almost irresistible.

Without any consultation of Congress, without even the suggestion of an attempt to discover the wishes of the American people, the President and the Secretary of State have embarked, almost at a moment's notice, upon a course which could easily lead us into a war, and one as troublesome, expensive and long-drawn out as that, for instance, upon which the British entered so lightheartedly in South Africa. It is an extraordinary illustration of the irresponsible character of our governmental system that the executive branch should thus have the power to commit the people to a national policy of the greatest importance, with the certainty that the tides of patriotic emotion which will be released by this action will sweep away all subsequent questioning as to the wisdom of their procedure.

The action taken is, to be sure, not without precedent. In 1912, when Huerta deserted to the rebels, after having been head of the federal army, we placed a similar embargo on all shipments of arms except to Madero. It is worth remembering that this action was not sufficient to save the latter's government, which was overthrown in the following year. In 1914, when Carranza was in rebellion against Huerta, another embargo was laid, this time without any exception. The present Hughes policy does not represent a sharp departure from precedent, except in its theoretical extension to all the Latin-American states. In fact, ever since the 1911 revolution which overthrew Diaz, our government has actively interested itself on behalf of whatever group, from time to time, seemed to represent the forces of law and order. It has been a half-hearted policy; our assistance has counted for little, in the long run; but our attitude could at no time be described as neutral.

In the present situation there are no elements which are new, or surprising to those with any knowledge of Mexican conditions. The existing constitution, wisely, no doubt, in view of Diaz's eight terms in office, requires a presidential election each four years, and forbids the incumbent to attempt to succeed himself. It also forbids the candidacy of anyone who has been a member of the Cabinet during the twelve months preceding the election. De la Huerta and Calles both resigned from the Cabinet last summer in deference to this

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law. Calles, of course, is General Obregon's choice. If you choose, you may describe the situation as an attempt to restore the Diaz methods, one incumbent forcing upon a country his successor.

But it might also be argued that the action is as natural, and no more menacing, than was that of Roosevelt in selecting Taft in 1908. De la Huerta chose to put the former interpretation upon it, and has plunged his country into a bath of blood in consequence, though he makes no general criticism of the Obregon policies or actions, of which he was a loyal supporter until a few months ago. Americans most closely in touch with Mexican affairs dismiss as of no significance de la Huerta's proposal that he would retire if Calles would do the same, leaving the field to someone like Vasconceles. This proposal might be taken seriously, they say, if de la Huerta had made it before taking up arms, and not afterward.

In this instance, then, the American government is supporting the Mexican régime which on the whole seems most to merit support. The Obregon government is a long way from perfect; but as far as can be judged from this distance, after disentangling the numerous skeins of propaganda, the average Mexican fares better under it than he would under such a reactionary, capitalist-controlled, clerical government as de la Huerta is likely to set up if he wins. Obregon has undoubtedly given Mexico the best, most democratic government it has ever had, and the best it is likely to get for a long time to come.

It is easy to grant this, however, and still maintain grave reservations as to the desirability of American intervention on his behalf. The New Republic has already pointed out that Obregon's successful appeal to the hated gringoes for assistance will help to turn popular sentiment toward de la Huerta. How can Mr. Hughes be sure, as he seeems to be, that he is "backing the right horse?" Obregon asserts that the rebels will soon be crushed; but similar statements have been made in every previous revolution and have usually proved false. If precedent counts for anything, the rebel has a better chance than the constituted authority, in Mexico. Madero revolted against Diaz—and was successful. Huerta revolted against Madero—and was successful. Carranza revolted against Huerta—and was successful. It is unwise, to be sure, to argue from analogy. But it is even more unwise to ignore the fact that de la Huerta may win; and that if he does, the policy we are pursuing is one which could easily end in war.

But the case need not be put on such narrow grounds of expediency. If in this instance we happen to be backing the best government Mexico has had, and a government the alternative to which is probably long continued chaos, we shall never be able to convince Latin America that we are doing so from any lofty motives of pure humanitarianism. Central and South America will accept our action as another instance of economic imperialism such as has been responsible for our attitude in the Caribbean. In Mexico itself, the same interpretation will be put upon our conduct even by those who will benefit from it. We have in fact bartered away a great part of our already dwindling prestige in the eyes of Latin-America—and for what? In order to bring assistance to a government which will be injured and not helped thereby, unless it proves to be so strong that it could have won without us. We have made a bargain which, the New Republic believes, we shall have continued and increasing occasion to regret.

Overworking the Tax Exempts

THERE are two good and sufficient reasons why the taxes falling on the smaller business and professional incomes should be reduced. The Treasury does not need the money, and the taxpayer does need it. The second reason does not hold so obviously for the higher incomes. The rare recipient of a million dollar income can give up half of it in taxes without sinking into rags and malnutrition. Therefore Secretary Mellon had to find a supplementary support for his proposal to cut deeply into the surtaxes. And he found it in an alleged flight of the capital of the rich into the safe refuge of the tax exempt securities. Our fifty percent surtaxes, Secretary Mellon assumes, have the effect of drying up the sources of our revenue. If we taxed more modestly, we should get more revenue in the end.

In support of this thesis the Secretary presented in his annual report a little table that spoke with all the solid eloquence of arithmetic. In 1916 we had 1,296 taxpayers with incomes over $300,000. In the next five years the numbers declined rapidly: 1,015, 627, 679, 395, 246. Their aggregate net income in 1916 was $992,000,000. It had dwindled to $153,000,000 by 1921. What became of these taxpayers? The Secretary does not grope long for an explanation. They betook themselves, with all their worldly goods, to the field of tax exempt investments.

This explanation passed current until the critics of Mellon's financial policies began to apply arithmetic to it. Is the field of tax exempt securities spacious enough to hold all the capital that is assumed to have sought refuge there? Senator Couzens presses this point home in his challenge to Mellon published on January 12. Any careful quantitative analysis will show that Secretary Mellon has jumped prematurely to conclusions that can not stand.

According to Secretary Mellon's own estimates

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there are in all $11,000,000,000 of wholly exempt securities, federal and state. In 1921, it appears from the Statistics for Income, at least $4,442,000,000 were in the possession of corporations, leaving $6,558,000,000 for individual ownership. Nor can it be supposed that all of this volume, or even a majority of it, is accessible to those who might desire to escape the higher surtaxes. The returns for 1922 showed only a little over $100,000,000 of tax exempts in all estates of $50,000 and over which paid inheritance taxes. From this figure we may infer that not more than $3,000,000,000 or at most $3,500,000,000 of tax exempts were in estates of $50,000 and over in the year 1922. The remaining $3,000,000,000 must have been widely held by persons of small property most of whom were not subject to super-tax at all.

We still have $3,500,000,000 as a refuge for tax dodgers. Not nearly all of that sum, however, could have been acquired by persons who were in the $300,000 income class in 1916. As Senator Couzens points out, such securities are widely held simply for their gilt-edged quality. Hardly any person in comfortable circumstances goes wholly without them. It would be astonishing if the small number of persons with very large incomes had succeeded in drawing to themselves over $1,000,000,000 or at most $1,500,000,000 of these tax exempts.

Here, then, is an approximate measure of the accommodations existing for tax-dodging capital. Now, if those 1,296 large incomes of 1916 were, as Secretary Mellon assumes, recurrent incomes and not largely windfalls, they must have represented a huge capital. Assuming a rate of return of ten percent, the capital would have amounted to ten billion. By 1921 the corresponding capital item had shrunk to $1,500,000,000. Could the missing $8,500,000,000 have gone into tax exempts? Into $1,500,000,000 of these? Impossible.

What became of it, then? For the most part, it never existed. Those incomes of $300,000 which were so numerous in 1916 and 1917 were sporadic killings. Those were the years of "war brides." They were the years when factories capable of turning out war supplies occasionally changed hands at ten times their prewar values. Such opportunities grew infrequent after we entered the war and at present they are so rare that the public reads for weeks about the modest $300,000 won by the lucky Lieutenant Wood.

The super-tax and tax dodging have had little to do with the dwindling of the class of 300,000 incomes. It follows that there is no possibility whatever that Secretary Mellon's promise of greater returns from lower rates will be realized. If the entire volume of tax exempt bonds in the hands of the super-tax payers were held by those with incomes above $300,000—and they are not—and if they were all replaced by six percent taxable investments on the reduction of the super-tax to twenty-five percent—and they would not be—the Treasury would recover only $65,000,000 in return for the $102,000,000 the super-tax reduction would cost it. Not half of the $3,500,000,000 is actually in the hands of this class. Nowhere near all of the tax exempt bonds would be got rid of by any class even if the supertax were reduced. It is possible that the Treasury might recover between $20,000,000 and $30,000,000 out of the $102,000,000 it would sacrifice. Not more.

We have no doubt whatever that tax dodging is going on, in the higher income classes as well as in the lower. We have no doubt that there would be less of it, anywhere, if the rates were made lighter. We shall find considerably more income in the lowest class when we cut the normal tax. As like as not, we should be able to get back $20,000,000 or $30,000,000 for a sacrifice of $102,000,000 here, just as in the highest income class.

If the income tax is to be reduced, there is perhaps a rough equity and expediency in reducing it all along the line, for the very rich as well as for those of modest incomes. We are not here quarrelling with Secretary Mellon for holding this position. Our quarrel rests on the Secretary's failure to represent the facts as they are. He has enormously overestimated the force of taxation in reducing the volume of income subject to the highest rates of the super-tax. He has ascribed to the tax exempt securities a potency in facilitating tax dodging that they do not possess. He has held out hopes for a recovery of revenues at lower rates that can not be realized. On the basis of these false premises he has worked out a schedule of reductions, which he presents as the final word in practical expediency. His proposals require drastic revision. And that will be their fate unless the Democrats and Progressives wish to explain later to their constituents that, like the Secretary himself, they were taken in by an argument that even the most elementary arithmetical calculations would dissipate.

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France and Her "Black Empire"

M. POINCARÉ has recently spoken a word that will rank some day with the history-making phrases of recent years. Lenin, advocating in 1917 a "breathing-space," crystallized triumphantly the peace-hunger of exhausted Russia; Mr. Wilson condensed an epoch into the "self-determination" from which tremendous consequences, for good or for evil, have flowed and still flow; a few years earlier, the German Emperor, with "the trident is in our hands" and "The Admiral of the Atlantic salutes the Admiral of the Pacific" stirred the English mind into a decisive suspicion that a new danger had arisen in the North Sea. Now M. Poincaré, discussing the position in Europe, remarks that France is no longer a country of 40,000,000 but of 100,000,000 people. The other 60,000,000 are natives, mostly Africans. When the next war comes, Mr. Poincaré means, Germany or whoever the enemies of France may be, will find that they have to fight not only the military contingents of a France of 40,000,000 but also the conscripts of the 60,000,000 natives of Indo-China, Madagascar, Somaliland, Algeria, Tunis and Morocco, and the West African provinces of Senegal, the Gold Coast, Dahomey and the Congo. To make the catalogue complete, one should add the natives of the new mandatory area of Togoland, for which, when the time comes, France may have her use. General Smuts has spoken of the "black hordes" of France. If, as some say, this is an exaggeration, M. Poincaré and General Mangin, whose phrase he borrowed, are to blame. They bid us contemplate a war in which the manhood of 60,000,000 natives, mostly blacks, will fight in Europe against the white peoples. They do not concern themselves, but we do, with speculation about the effect which the training to arms of large numbers of West Africans may have on the relations of white man and black in Africa itself. The phrase that they have used will go echoing down the years and its effect will be incalculable.

The new phenomenon is the decision of France, taken as a result of the war, to train large numbers of troops in West or Equatorial Africa in the French possessions along the Senegal, Niger and Congo rivers. The use of natives from the other French possessions has not aroused much interest or disquietude. During the war over 40,000 troops from Annam (Indo-China) fought in France, 30,000 Madagascans and 3,000 from Somaliland and the Pacific Islands. Besides these, 180,000 were recruited in Senegal and 130,000 of them fought in France. The Senegalese had nearly 30,000 casualties. There were also, of course, large numbers from Algeria and Tunis, but these belong to a higher stratum of culture and are not included in the apprehensions of those who are afraid of "La France Noire." The Annamites and Madagascans, too, were distinguished for a fairly high intelligence. They can understand other things besides the mere business of killing: they can be employed on artillery. The West Africans, on the other hand, are savages. They can kill and get themselves killed with great efficiency and courage. In a mutual slaughtering-down, such as war between nations has now become, they will be admirable material for the French General Staff, which intends to supply them with both officers and non-commissioned officers from the white establishment. They are thus a really economical form of gun-fodder, turned out by mass-production methods and the nearest approach to the Robots of the play that the world has yet seen. Only, they are worse than the Robots in that they do possess a mentality and culture of a definitely low type. They are all legally liable to foreign service.

These men are not merely to be brought to Europe to defeat, or it may be to destroy, a higher culture. Large numbers of them are to be stationed and trained in France in peace-time. They are part of France's permanent "metropolitan" army. They are required and are kept in France for two reasons. First, because of the decline of population in France, which will be greatly accentuated by the war. A recent debate on army policy in the French Chamber produced some illuminating figures. France has 11,696,000 families and the "child-rate" is as follows:

	Families	Percent
No children	1,830,000	16
One child	3,268,000	28
Two children	2,776,000	24
Three children	1,646,000	14
More than three children	2,176,000	18
	11,696,000	100

These figures are bad enough, but under the pressure of war-weariness the government has had to reduce the term of military service from three years to eighteen months, so that the number of men in training and available is much less than it used to be. The emergency method of the war in regard to West African levies is therefore to be made permanent. The standing army of France is to be 660,000. Of these 200,000, in round figures, are to be natives and over 90,000 are to be drawn yearly from West and Equatorial Africa. When the scheme is in full working order it is estimated that a reservoir of between six and seven hundred thousand black troops will be available from this quarter. The plan is capable of indefinite extension but that is as far as it now goes. The number of natives to be kept permanently in France (mostly in the occupied territories but

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partly in south and south-western France) is 65,000. General Bourgeois, in his report to the Senate on the army law, remarked that "this is a new experiment, and for many reasons—moral, hygienic and economic—it appears to the government that this figure is the extreme limit that the government can attain today." It is significant that the bulk of these troops should be used in the occupied German regions, but it is also significant that some of them should be quartered in France itself. The French have not the sense of the "color-bar" that, for instance, their English neighbors certainly have. Even so, one would have thought that the objections to the quartering of such troops in France were overwhelming. They are of a primitive and savage type. They do not bring their women folk with them. In the occupied regions the French compel the Germans to maintain brothels, which are filled with white women. What they do, or will do, when black battalions are posted in French towns we have not heard. There is only a choice of evils. However one looks at it, it is difficult to suppose that the moral and social consequences of this new policy can be other than bad both for France and for Africa, black and white, and one can only believe that France has been driven to it by the all-absorbing fear which is bred of her own diminishing population.

It is only fair to add that General Mangin, who is the father of the "black France" policy, has drawn a very favorable picture of the African army. He admits that the forest people are undeveloped savages. "Overshadowed by the violent vegetation . . . the inhabitants of the clearings remain brutes. The forest is terrible." But with this little exception he views the black army in a mist of vaguely roseate sentiment. We must "cultivate the world sense." (Example: the brothels at Bonn.) We white men "are not the first, and we may not be the last, representatives of civilization." Civilization is always on the General's lips. "All that vast zone which stretches from Senegal to Abyssinia, from Egypt to Morocco, from Algeria to Nigeria, is filled with monuments which testify to an immemorial civilization." It may be, but as an argument for grafting a raw African savage into the body of white Europe it has about as much relation to the present as the mediaeval civilization of the Arabs has to the brigand Bedouin of the Mesopotamian desert or the ancient glories of India to the bloody-minded Moplahs of the Malabar coast.

The French General Staff are not really concerned with the evidences of African culture. Their aim is to meet the falling birth-rate and the reduction of the time of military service in France by using natives to comprise one-third of the peace establishment and to bring large additional forces to France as rapidly as possible on the outbreak of war. They have recently taken a most important decision which is the complement of the measures for maintaining a black army. For years Frenchmen have debated several schemes for building a railway from the French North African provinces to the rivers of West Africa. This is a matter of some 2,000 miles. Whatever route was chosen, such a line must run across the vast tract of the Sahara desert. It could have no commercial justification unless minerals were found in large quantities, and of that there is no sign. Yet the War Council and the Supreme Council of National Defence have now sanctioned the construction of a line from the Algerian railways through the centre of the Sahara to the upper waters of the Niger. There it would be linked on to the railway lines in Senegal and the other provinces which are already built or building. It can have no other object than to carry the West African army northwards to the Mediterranean as an alternative to the long and dangerous sea-route which follows the African coast and passes through the narrows at Gibraltar.

All the branch lines in Senegal, Dahomey, the Gold Coast and the Congo will feed this military trunk railway. The position of its proposed terminus in relation to the new mandatory area of Togoland is significant. It lies not far to the north of the Togo boundary. Under the Versailles Treaty the rule is that the mandatory powers can only raise forces in the mandatory areas "for local police purposes and for the defence of the territory." But France obtained from her Allies at Versailles a special privilege, which is that she should be free to use such troops outside their own territories in case of a "general war." The trunk railway to Algiers or Oran from the Upper Niger will have its uses when France is of opinion that she is involved, or about to be involved, in a "general war."

The implications of this Sahara railway are extremely interesting. During the Great War France transported troops from Africa to Europe with ease and security because she was in alliance with England and England kept the seas. In another war, if she were in alliance with England, she would expect to do the same; the railway would not be needed. The railway project, therefore, contemplates a state in which England would be either neutral or hostile. In other words, it assumes that France will be able to transport her black army across the Mediterranean—a stretch of five to six hundred miles. As France cannot rely on securing the control of the sea by defeating the battleships fleets of either England or Italy, the further assumption is that she calculates on being able to guard the Algiers-Marseilles route by other means. In a word, peering dimly and uncertainly into the future, like all the rest of us, she looks forward to a future in which by means of destroyer craft, mines, aeroplanes, submarines

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and fast (or underwater) transport, she will be able to keep the hostile fleet of surface ships away from this sea-channel. She may not be confident but it must be on such hopes and no other that she is building. After all, though the scheme came to nothing, the British admiralty in 1914-15 debated the idea of penning the German fleet into its harbors. Why should not the French staff, driven by the necessity of somehow or other getting its black troops to France, contemplate the possibility of so besetting Malta and Gibraltar, or the Italian naval bases, with all the lighter instruments of naval warfare that the capital ships would never reach, even if they sought to reach, the line of transportation from Africa to France? And, if such an assumption does not underly the decision to go on with a purely military project involving great difficulty and expense, what is the explanation?

The policy of "La France Noire" must be regarded as a whole. There are some critics who say that the danger is exaggerated and that M. Poincaré's talk of a France of a hundred millions is so much "hot air." But that 130,000 African blacks actually fought in France is a hard fact. That 65,000 of them are now stationed in Europe and are to be a permanent part of the European establishment; that the existing army scheme provides for a three-years' native service under which between half and three-quarters of a million blacks will be available; that the machinery will be instantly ready for training several million more; that the proposed railway is to be made for no other purpose than to carry these forces to France; and that France, pursuing peace as a barely suppressed form of war, is being inexorably driven to augment her man-power by any means, however deplorable—all these are hard facts and not rhetoric.

It is not unlikely that this question will in a few years become one of the most disturbing elements in European politics. The neighbors of France will not contentedly contemplate the use against them of hordes of Africans. They will disapprove a method which they believe is degrading to the self-respect of Europe and of the white man. These blacks, since they are in no sense the equal of the white man in intelligence or culture, will assimilate only his vices. They will mix with the lowest of his type, both male and female, and such ideas as they carry back to their own country will be demoralizing to their own countrymen and subversive of the position which the white man holds in Africa. They are not co-citizens of the French, nor, in spite of General Mangin, can they be that for many years. They are conscripts and mercenaries, upholding for their French masters the dominion which those masters are too few, too weak or too decadent themselves to maintain. That is the news which they will carry back to the millions of Africa with an arrogance born of the "equality" with the white race which they have learned in the wineshop and the brothel. Alike in Europe and in Africa the white man will pay, one day, for "La France Noire."

W. P. Crozier.

Pocketed Americans

II.

In these valley-closets of Appalachia orthodoxy is not losing its grip, nor do fundamentalists clash with liberals. Darwin is unknown or anathema. Religion is not a way of life but a fire insurance policy. I heard a preacher shout: "Is our object to live this life or to live in eternity?" A gaunt grandma of seventy-four lamented to me that the young people of today are bent on enjoyment and think little of the Hereafter. She revels in the harsh and forbidding features of her sombre creed. She loves the preachers of "old-time religion" and sniffs at the educated young preachers who find beauty in the Gospel. Twice she has been baptized but only in a "crick-hole." She yearns to be immersed some day in a river, as was John the Baptist in the "River Jerdan." At times she misdoubts if she is not "lost." "Nowadays," she complains, "folks goes to church just to show their fine clothes and the preachers preach for money. They're always shovin' the collection plate under my nose and tellin' me, 'The Lord loveth a cheerful giver.' In *my* day a young woman would cut a piece off the cloth in her loom on Saturday night and make a dress she'd go to meetin' in next mornin'. And, if a man hadn't shoes he wa'n't too proud to go to church barefoot. As for the preacher's pay, land sakes, *that* was fixed up on a week-day, never on the Sabbath."

The Bible settles every question and no other book is worth looking into. The only object in learning to read is to be able to read the Bible. You are religious if you are absorbed in gaining heaven. "Just think," said one of my hosts, "of all that happiness; and after a million years it wouldn't hardly have started!" He has no interest in government, never votes and doesn't care what happens to the rest of America or the world. He has the naïve selfishness of a child to whom heaven is a mountain of ice cream.

The Old Regular Baptists will not have a paid clergy, oppose Sunday Schools and do not exert themselves to make converts, for that is God's job. To be taken into membership you must have

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had an "experience," i. e. seen "visions" or heard "voices." They do nothing for foreign missions on the theory that God is abundantly able to convert the heathen in his own time and way. Besides, didn't Christ say, "Carry neither purse nor scrip?" How human stinginess relishes that phrase! What Christians ever made so few financial sacrifices for their religion? "I don't pay a cent," they will say with a chuckle. Salvation costs them less than their plug tobacco. Never has Christianity sunk to a more sordid form. The Catholicism of Ecuador is hardly so low as this degraded Protestantism born of ignorance and isolation.

Preaching is not to be learned in college nor seminary. The unlettered preacher, who cannot even read out his text but misquotes it from memory, does not ponder his sermon in advance but gets on his feet trusting that the Holy Spirit will put the right words into his mouth. "This is only a talk," he will say; "this is outside talkin'." "Whatever the Lord impresses on my mind I'll tell it thataway." Presently he warms up, lays aside coat, then vest, and in a high chanting voice pours forth a verbal torrent of little meaning interspersed with "Hallelujah!" and "Praise God!" Every sentence or two he will raise his voice with a shout that will carry a mile. The godly, instead of finding such ranting ridiculous, look upon it with awe, for it is supposed to be the sure sign of the presence of the "Power."

These Highlanders have been represented as "our contemporary ancestors," who have stood still at the stage of their forebears when they got pocketed in these valleys. No, it is not so simple as that. Some clans have not even held on to the culture they brought from tide-water Virginia in the days of Daniel Boone. Isolation was too much for them, and, like some of the South African Boers, *they went back*. Lacking schools, books, newspapers and educated clergy, there was no element among them to blow on the dying embers of learning.

Many of the old will tell you they never had but a few months of schooling, that in their childhood there was only a month or two of "free school" a year. What, then, must have been the school opportunities of *their* parents? Of their grandparents? Since little of the land is fit to till, population has been sparse and not a few children have lived out of the reach of schools. When they were big enough to attend they were too old to begin. Once a transmission line of knowledge is broken, it is hard to reknit. Unlettered backwoodsmen don't want their children to know more than "paw" and "maw" did. They reason: "We've got along purty well without book-larnin'; why can't they?" And so you find ignorance enthroned and arrogant, not humble but self-confident and dogmatic. Benighted preachers have taught them to despise learning and confirmed them in their pride of ignorance. The Bible has grown into a fetish, salvation is an obsession and the thirst to know this wonderful world is made light of.

Hence, the intellect has become as sterile as a lava field. Have these Highlanders produced beauty, as have the peasants of Connemara, or Brittany, or Norway, or the Tyrol? No. Not one hymn, song, ballad, fairy tale, legend, carving, picture, jar, embroidery, pattern of fabric, design of tool, game, festivity or ceremony has come out of these mountains which was not taken in there.

Fortunately the darkness is being broken. More power has been bestowed on the county and state educational authorities. Children are required to be in school. North Carolina leads the South in standards of preparation and pay of school teachers. In the worst counties of eastern Kentucky, rural social settlements and community centres, supported from outside, are bringing succor to the public schools. South Carolina found, a few years ago, that three-fourths of her Negro children could read, but only one-fourth of her white mill children. This turned the scales for compulsory education. Moreover, this state sends out teachers who go about from farm to farm teaching adult illiterates to read and write. I found a young woman footing twelve miles a day to make the rounds of her twenty-four pupils. She gives each five lessons a week. All her art is required to persuade these illiterates to receive instruction of her. The state gives a dollar to one who gets far enough to write his or her name and a copy of the Bible to each who manages to read twenty-five pages of the Bible Story Book.

Mental darkness and blind prolificacy make Appalachia a national menace. The Highlanders' comment on our participation in the World War is worthy of morons. And should they continue to beget children at their present rate, Appalachia alone would have us Chinafied by the close of this century. Happily, the isolation and darkness of this "land of the sky" are destined soon to disappear. With superb courage the State of North Carolina has gone in debt $65,000,000 in order that even its roughest parts shall know what good roads are. In a year every county will be traversed by a splendid state road and all the county seats will be linked. Thousands of families in automobiles from the hot lands to the south and west will come up to the mountains in quest of coolness and everywhere the startled Highlander will meet the summer tourist.

Twenty years ago I read, "The Southern Appalachians are the largest horseback area remaining in the world." With this in mind I attended services in a country church ten miles from town. In the grove I counted twenty-one Fords and one saddle-beast! Once the people sample the fine trunk highways, they will insist that their counties shall improve the secondary roads which lead to them.

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Then the neighborhood will improve the minor ways which let you out onto the improved road with a Ford rather than an ox-cart. In five years isolation will be at an end for western North Carolina and telephones, newspapers, motion picture films, high schools, summer tourists and educated clergymen will bring to bear the influences which are in play everywhere else in the United States. Other states of Appalachia, struck by the daring of North Carolina, are planning great highway construction.

Summer tourists will be one factor in dispelling the shadows in the strait twisting valleys of West Virginia and eastern Kentucky. But there is another factor in sight. Black veins run through and under the hills and year by year the spurs of the coal railroads creep up the creek. Presently there is a mining camp and the influences, good and bad, which come with it will play upon the young people along the "branches." Within twenty years the quest of coal will have wrecked the farming of eastern Kentucky and released her entrapped Americans into the rest of the United States.

EDWARD ALSWORTH ROSS.

[*This is the second of two articles by Professor Ross. The first appeared in our issue of January 9.*]

"Sexual Sublimation:"

*A Biologist's View**

TO my mind there are two very general questions which the student of human sex psychology now has to face, if he takes not necessarily the whole but the central theses of psycho-analysis, however much pruned, as proven. The first is this: granted that sex does play such a large part, especially in early years, in the genesis of our mental organization, is it desirable that the average adult or adolescent should, by analysis, be given full self-knowledge on the subject?

The second is this: granted that sex does penetrate into more corners of mind in man than in lower organisms, is this really a regrettable thing, or can we find any grounds for believing it to be desirable or biologically progressive?

To answer this we shall have to go back a little to first principles, and consider, however briefly, certain facts as to the march of evolution.

Evolution is essentially progressive. It proceeds on the whole in a certain direction, and that direction is on the whole towards a realization of what seems to us to have positive value. The direction, however, as a matter of fact, is most striking when we consider the maximum level attained, much less so when we consider the average, not at all when we look at the minimum.

The method or mechanism of progress may differ in different types, and it does differ in man from that which is found in other mammals. In most higher animals progress is brought about chiefly by natural selection operating upon individuals, although in a few forms selection operates chiefly upon groups of communities: in both cases the changes in the inherited constitution of the species are the important changes. In man, however, in all except the very early stages of his development, changes in inherited constitution have been small and unimportant, and the chief changes of evolutionary significance have been those in tradition; selection among individuals has been of relatively little importance, and selection has fallen mainly upon groups and, to an ever-increasing extent, upon their ideas and traditions.

In spite of differences in method as between different types of organism, the tendency has been in the same direction—towards a possibility of greater control, greater independence, greater complexity, and greater regulation or harmony.

Looked at from the evolutionary point of view, the moving, dynamic point of view, we have to think of human sex-psychology in yet another way. We must consider not only what it is but what it may become.

The general rule in evolution—the natural and obvious rule—is that acquisitions are not thrown away when change occurs, but built upon, utilized for some new function. The endostyle of the lowest chordates, part of a very primitive type of feeding mechanism, was converted, when they changed their mode of life, into the thyroid gland: the parathyroids develop from the remains of the gill-apparatus when gills are discarded for lungs: the secondary sexual differences which originate as accidental consequence of the primary difference between the sexes are, over and over again, elaborated into special characters employed in courtship.

So the sex-instinct and its associated emotion, at first simply one among a number of separate and scarcely-correlated instincts, has in man become the basis for numerous new mental functions. It can enter into the composition of various emotions, though its character is often disguised and its presence often undetected. It contributes to some of the most exalted states of mind which we can experience. The sexual relationship, which in lower animals involves neither contact nor even propinquity, but, simply simultaneous discharge of repro-

* This essay is part of a longer discussion included in Mr. Huxley's Essays of a Biologist recently published by A. A. Knopf, New York.

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ductive cells, and in most animals is a purely temporary affair, is very different in man. Even in those birds and non-human mammals in which the sexes remain associated for long periods or permanently, the different departments of life are more in water-tight compartments, the psychical activity is subordinate to the physiological: in man the physiological side, though of course still basic and necessary, is more—and can be much more—subordinate to the psychological, and all parts of the mental life interpenetrate to a much greater extent; so that the sex-instinct may become transformed by a psychological process roughly analogous to the transformation of physical energy, and reappear in altered guise in various other activities of mind.

If we look at the matter broadly, we see that man is in a period of evolutionary transition as regards sex. The greatest change connected with sex which has been made in the evolution of higher animals was the change by which there was evolved a brain and mind with associated sense-organs in which accurate perception of objects at a distance could occur, a mechanism which really dominated the working of the organism as a whole, and in which memory and emotion seemed to play an important part. Once this happened, the sex-instinct could be linked up with general emotional reactions and connected with external objects capable of inducing emotion.

What was the result? That in every group possessing such a type of mind, epigamic characters of a beautiful or striking or bizarre nature were evolved. This first linking-up of sex with mind produced, eventually, a large proportion of the beauty of the organic world. It colored and adorned not only many a bird, but even newts and fish and spiders; it helped elicit song and music from mere sounds and noises; it moulded our own bodies, colored our lips and eyes, and everywhere helped in adding grace to mere serviceableness; it saw to it that, as St. Paul puts it, "even our uncomely parts have an abundant comeliness." But, as we have just pointed out, its connection with the mind's higher centres was in all pre-human forms still temporary, under the control of cyclical physiological changes, and the mind as a whole was still constructed in compartments, so that different instincts and different experiences did not necessarily or even usually come in contact with each other.

The next great change is being made now; it concerns a further development of mind and a consequent fresh mode of connection of sex with mental life. As we have outlined above, this change in mind consists in the tendency towards uniting the different parts of the psyche, both those portions given by heredity and the modification due to experience, into a single organic whole, and in making this whole more dominant over the other aspects of the organism; the consequent tendency as regards the relationship of sex to the organism is towards taking it out of its single groove, its water-tight compartment, and bringing it into more complete and more permanent union with the rest of the mind. Furthermore, the main change and the consequent change as regards sex are both of a biologically progressive nature.

We are now, I think, owing to our taking this broad biological view, in a better position to make up our minds as to some at least of the difficulties which beset us today in any attempt to deal squarely with the relation of sex to human life. It is true that some of these difficulties are permanent. The synthesis of a unitary and comprehensive mental organization can never be an easy task. The child is endowed with a number of instinctive tendencies which, as in animals, each tend whenever aroused to occupy the whole mental field to the exclusion of all others, producing divergence and lack of coördination instead of unity and organization. Then again, the experience of any one individual may be highly unusual. For the child to coördinate his various tendencies with each other and with his own experience and with the tradition and experience of the race must always be difficult, and there will always be some failures.

There is another permanent difficulty, a biological disharmony, in the fact that sexual maturity in man comes several years before general maturity, and that again, at least in any state of civilization which we can at present imagine as practicable, several years before the economic possibility of marriage. There will always be crises of adolescence; there will always be suffering and difficulty due to this disharmony in time between the origin of the full sexual instinct and the possibility of its proper satisfaction.

However, granted these permanent difficulties, there are others which may be reduced or made to disappear. Granted that we have to organize our minds into a whole, we can see the general plan on which we should aim at such organization. We must aim first at having no barriers between different parts of the mind. Every attempt must be made in the education of children to prevent there being a stigma attached to one whole section of mental life, and so to avoid its partial or total dissociation from the rest. On the other hand, the absence of barriers does not imply the absence of any relation of subordination or dominance of one part to another. One of the most important biological generalizations is that progressive evolution is accompanied by the rise of one part to dominance and, whenever there are many parts to be considered, by the arrangement of the rest in some form of hierarchy, each part being subordinate to one above, dominant to one below. It is such a hierarchy which we must try to construct in our mental organization.

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It is obviously impossible here to go into the whole question of values and ideals, but it is clear to anyone who has given the briefest reflection to the subject that there are certain values, aesthetic, intellectual, and moral, which are ultimate for the mind of man, certain ideals—of truth and honesty, intellectual satisfaction, righteousness or at least freedom from the sense of sin or guilt, completeness and self-realization, unselfishness and serviceableness and so forth—which (though perhaps in varying proportions) are by common consent accepted as the highest: and further that the greater the attempt to deepen and broaden these, to increase their mental intensity and to widen their range and association, the more they tend to emerge into something increasingly unitary, in which it is seen that honesty is also beautiful and useful, that intellectual satisfaction is in the long run serviceable to the community, that unselfishness to be effective requires thought and will besides mere altruistic emotion, that one of the greatest aids to any genuine righteousness is an aesthetic love of beautiful things that prevents our doing ugly things, and so ad infinitum.

The proper way, then, to build the sex instinct into the mental system is not to have its stimulation cause a merely physiological and uninhibited desire for its gratification, nor to bring about a forcible repression and an attempt to break connection between it and the other parts of the mind.

The desirable method is to have free connection between it and the dominant ideas, so that its stimulation brings about a stimulation of them too. This leads, as a matter of experience, to the incorporation of the sexual emotion in the dominant ideas, or we had better say an interpenetration of one with the other, so that the sexual emotion is no longer simply sexual emotion, but is become part of something very much larger and very much better. Let the great writers say in their few words what I should say much worse in many.

Wordsworth's "sense sublime of something far more deeply interfused" opens a window on to the general process of sublimation: and Blake's description of the physical union of the sexes as "that . . . on which the soul expands her wing" is an epitome of a particular aspect of our particular problem. Or again, when St. Paul says, "Am I not free?" or "All things are lawful unto me," he means that by subordinating all sides of himself to his highest ideals, he has reached that state in which what he does is right to him because he only wants to do what is right. (True that, as he himself confesses, he is not always able to keep in that state: but when he is in it, he attains that complete freedom which is the subordination of lower to higher desire.)

Physiologically speaking, the activation of the sex instinct, when the connection is made in this way, arouses the higher centres, and these react upon the centres connected with the sex instinct, modifying their mode of action. The net result is thus that both act simultaneously to produce a single whole of a new type. Processes of this nature are common in the nervous system, as has been shown for instance by Hughlings Jackson, Head and Rivers.

Thus the higher, dominant parts of the mind are strengthened by their connection with such lower parts as the simple sex instinct, and the sex instinct is able to play a rôle in any operation of the mind, however exalted, in which emotion is in any way concerned. Rivers believes that the actual conflict between controlled and controlling parts of the mind is a potent generator of mental "energy;" and adds, "whatever be the source of the energy, however, we can be confident that by the process of sublimation the lives upon which it is expended take a special course, and in such case it is not easy to place any limit to its activity. We do not know how high the goal that it may reach."

The change is thus on the one side from the relative independence of the sex instinct towards its subordination to a position in a hierarchy of mental process, but on the other from a rigid limitation of its scope towards a greater universality by establishing connections with all other parts of the mind. Further, there is also a change towards greater dominance and "self-determination" of the mental as against the physical.

A great many of the difficulties which beset us, both as individuals and as communities, come from the fact that both these changes are only in process of being made, and are (even approximately) complete only in a very small number of persons.

Lack of restraint is failure to construct a properly-working hierarchy. That is a very simple example. Less easy to analyze but equally vicious, are the innumerable cases in which some sort of equilibrium is only attained not by a free interaction of dominant and subordinate parts, but by repression. Conflicts arise, which persist, either in an open form or in the subterranean regions of the unconscious. In either case they tend to be projected by the subject into his ideas of other people. This projection, or interpretation of external reality in terms of one's self, is a curious and almost universal attribute of the human mind. The most familiar example is perhaps the anthropomorphism which in religion after religion has invested the powers of the universe with human form, human mental process, human personality—or at least with form, mind, and personality similar to those of man; while a very simple case is that in which certain neurotic types project their depression so as to color everything that comes into their cognizance a gloomy black.

In the sphere of sex this process is, alas, most potently at work. The man in whom the sexual instinct still lives a more or less independent, un-

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inhibited life of its own, tends—unless he has special evidence to the contrary, and often even then—to interpret the behavior and the minds of others in familiar terms, and to suppose that they too must be stopped by fear of punishment or of loss of caste if they are not to commit excesses.

On the other hand, those in whom there is constant conflict with a sexual origin project it here, there, and everywhere into the breasts of those they know, and interpret others' motives in terms of their own repressed wishes.

Furthermore, most of our existing laws and customs are based on a state of society in which the changes to which we have referred had not progressed as far as they have today, and man's psychology was a little less removed from that of other mammals.

The result is that those who attempt the complete emancipation possible to a properly-organized mind are confronted first by the lag of our institutions and traditions, and second by the unconcealed suspicion of all those—and they are as yet the large majority—in which the conflicts arising out of sex are unresolved. It is from the sum of those conflicts that the spirit prevalent with regard to sex today derives its character—shocked and shamefaced as regards one's own sexual life, vindictive and grudging as regards the difficulties of others. The bulk of men and women cannot treat sexual problems in a scientific spirit, because of the store of bottled-up emotion in the wrong place that they have laid up for themselves by their failure to come to proper terms with their sexual instincts. The soul should grow to deserve the words Crashaw wrote of St. Theresa—"O thou undaunted daughter of desires!" But this the soul of such disharmonic beings can never do.

This brings us to our other pressing question. Should the results of psycho-analytic methods, the knowledge that the sex instinct is fundamental and is interwoven into the roots of the highest spiritual activities—should the inculcation and demonstration of this be part of education? Some would say yes, and would argue that to know oneself is essential to a proper realization of one's capacities. Personally I am extremely doubtful of the correctness of this answer. Knowledge of the processes of digestion is not necessary to digest well—so long as we go on digesting well: it is only necessary when we digest badly. In that case the processes involved are automatic: but even in processes which require a great deal of learning, we find a similar state of affairs. A man can become expert at, say, a game requiring the most delicate adjustments of hand and eye without analyzing the processes he employs, but by practising them as finished articles, so to speak; and it is equally obvious that Shakespeare and Shelley and Blake and other great writers produced their works without the least analytical knowledge of the obscure and rather unpleasant processes which, if we are to believe the critics who psycho-analyze dead authors in the pages of Freudian journals, were "really" at work below the surface. Analysis constitutes a serious surgical operation for the mind, and, as one of the leading Austrian psycho-analysts has recently said, we do not want to perform this operation on healthy people any more than we want to open their abdomens merely to see that their viscera are normal.

If matters concerning sex are treated properly during a child's development and education, the necessity for psycho-analysis and any extension of analytic knowledge of the foundations of one's own mind that it may bring is done away with. If it can be insured that there is no obvious avoidance of the subject leading to repression in the child's mind, and on the other hand no undue prominence given to it so that a morbid curiosity is aroused, a large proportion of the conflicts that now arise could be avoided. The other necessity is that there should be provision for sublimation—in art or music, social service, or one's own work, in religion, or in modified form, in sport or romance.

It is perfectly possible, in such case, for mental development to proceed naturally and comparatively smoothly towards a unified organization of the type of which we have spoken. Psycho-analysis would not help a boy or girl developing in such a way, any more than would a study of all the characters we have inherited from our simian forefathers help us to realize our specifically human possibilities. On the other hand, when the intellectual desire to know things for their own sake is aroused, as it is in most boys and girls between the ages of about fourteen and twenty, then just as it is good, in order to get a true picture of the universe, for them to know and be presented with the evidence for man's evolution from lower forms, so it is good for the same reason to give an account of their psychological organization, including evidence for the rôle which sex plays in the genesis of higher mental activities—without, however, any necessity for psychological experiments in burrowing into their own foundations. In this case such knowledge would have the additional value of putting them on their guard against being prejudiced by their own incompletely-adjusted conflicts.

We are all of us too prone to think that a phenomenon is somehow "explained," or interpreted better, by analyzing it into its component parts or discovering its origin than by studying it in and for itself.

The new type of mental organization acquired by man permits of wholly new types of mental process, of a complexity as far exceeding those that we deduce in brutes as does the physical organism of a dog or an ant that of a polyp or a protozoan: and it is part of our business to realize those possibilities to the fullest extent.

JULIAN HUXLEY.

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The Reporter Prays for Relief

THE wind of nationalism which has raged over Europe since the World War has maintained the reputation of all ill winds by blowing at least one good: it has given Europe a priceless amount of publicity and thereby "sold" it to Americans, the most profitable victims of the wanderlust in history. The "See America First" movement has simply gone to pot among those who can pay for a transatlantic tour. It is an established fact that Europe is teeming with dirty, ignorant, radical, backward, degenerate, low-standard-of-living, low-intelligence-quotient, liquor-drinking foreigners without a saving drop of Nordic blood or a redeeming iota of reverence for the Constitution. Still, that part of the world has had a fascination to which all Americans with money in the bank have yielded shamelessly in the last five years.

Before 1914, all that the returned taxpayer of the good old U. S. A. had to talk about was such dull stuff as Shakespeare's home, Napoleon's tomb, St. Somebody's cathedral and the tears that come to the eyes (Ah, friends, the lump that swells the throat) upon beholding Dear-Old-Goddess-of-Liberty-God-Bless-Her-Heart once more. The war has changed all that. Instead of collecting musty items of morbid, un-American history, one now "studies conditions in Europe" and is hounded for opinion on same by all and sundry.

Studying conditions in Europe is manifestly a more satisfactory practice than mere sight-seeing. It has an important, business-like sound and provides opportunity to use such phrases as, "the social, economic and political aspects of the situation." "Studying conditions in Europe." The words, unlike "sight-seeing," carry no connotations of wasting a lot of valuable time and good sound dollars for the frivolous purpose of traipsing around among king-worshippers. "Studying conditions in Europe" sounds almost like an official mission. It gives the traveler a purpose. And what is life without a purpose? Also, a person of any standing at all in his community who studies conditions in Europe is certain of an opportunity of addressing at least one civic organization on the subject. Persons of genuine importance can count on a whole week of speech-making, to say nothing of generous space in the newspapers. What red-blooded, two-fisted, upstanding he-man can resist such a privilege to contribute his portion toward saving civilization and making this a bigger, brighter, better world in which to build up a nice business?

Concurrent with the national desire to diagnose the ills of Europe, there has arisen on the part of the American press a persistent interest in the bulletins issued from the sick room by numberless self-appointed physicians. Europe became front-page stuff in the summer of 1914 and, contrary to expectations just before the Treaty of Versailles was made public, has remained so ever since. The triangle formed by France, Germany and England ranks with the eternal triangle in the news of the day. Nothing short of an international horse race or prize fight can compete with international politics for space. The Ruhr has long since bested even Henry Ford in the struggle for top heads.

The reader is by this time fully aware that the writer is striving after alleged humor at the expense of what is probably the most momentous problem civilized mankind has ever been called upon to face. This is reprehensible. There can be no argument about it. The only apology offered is that the writer has suffered at the hands of conditions in Europe. For a period that now seems to stretch back into infancy, he has been supporting a family largely by reporting the views of divers returning worthies on conditions in Europe. More than once, while trying to make editions with an interview dealing with the subject, he has missed his meals and sympathized with the starving populations across the sea. After you have been engaged on that sort of thing for months that run into years with no prospect of relief until after another war, you gradually come to lose all shame.

Far be it from the writer to protest against a situation and offer no remedy. As someone has aptly put it, what the world needs is constructive, not destructive, criticism. So the following suggestions are offered:

Opinions on conditions in Europe and our relation to them fall into about half a dozen main classes which should be numbered for the convenience of the press in the future. When a reporter is phoning an interview to his office, he should give the proper number to the rewrite man who would then write the story without further ado. The chief theories may be summarized, thus:

Tory theory—Hurrah for Mussolini!
Liberal theory—Hurrah for England!
Radical theory—Hurrah for Russia!
Professional World War veteran theory—Hurrah for France!
Isolationist theory—Hurrah for Us!
Pro-League theory—Hurrah for Everybody!
Average man theory—Well, well, well!

In time, the public might be brought to an acquaintance with the classifications and their respective numbers so that a man being interviewed could begin by saying, in accordance with the most approved technique, "I don't want to pose as having settled the problems of Europe within a few weeks," and then give the number of his theory, thus saving time for himself, the public,—and, yes, to be sure, the reporter.

G. K. PHILLIPS.

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The Spook Sonata

The Spook Sonata, a Play in Three Movements, by August Strindberg. Translated by Edwin Bjorkman. Provincetown Playhouse. January 5, 1923.

I HAVE seen The Spook Sonata twice at the Provincetown Playhouse and on both occasions I have followed it not with a steady excitement but with a persistent and unflagging interest from start to finish. The audiences in both cases have listened, especially the audience later than the first night, with an attention such as I have rarely seen in the theatre. I might easily say, then, that it does not matter what Strindberg's play means, we find it alive and absorbing. The Spook Sonata could be taken as a good illustration of how a work of art can be expressed only by itself. It need not at all be true that a work of art in order to be admirable must be reducible to some pat statement of what it is about. And there are many people who might sit and watch this drama of Strindberg's and feel throughout it a certain truth, but who if they were asked what the play means, would go up in smoke, quite lost. Before the demand arose for this statement, however, they have experienced in the play a life that interests them; in it they have given themselves to something that was like the flux and confusion and urgent logic of dreams. The play, as they may see, is uneven and disordered, but it slips from one strange inner certainty to another, and abounds in recognitions and revelations whose point arises quite as much from the moment in which they come as from their words. In this sense The Spook Sonata approaches music in its mode of expression. In this sense we may leave much of it as it stands and not discard it because we cannot put it fully into sentences for our inquiring friends. And yet we may discuss it.

The Spook Sonata may be taken, as it often is on the Continent, as a realistic play about the debasements and ideals, the sins and the dirt and the flights of life. In that case the acting, the setting, the entire production, would follow an exact realism. And the last act would be a moody sarcasm on the banality of youthful love and youthful ideals. Within this theme the cook, the mortgages, the old woman who thinks she is a parrot, and all such elements in the play, would take their place. Such an interpretation of The Spook Sonata would no doubt be as true to Strindberg's general characteristics as the Provincetown Playhouse interpretation now is. But it would not be more so. And, such a play would not, I think, be worth doing at all. It would be only one more instance of a limited, ugly, tasteless, Northern provincialism, a stew about men and crookedness, about the filth of women, and even about having to count the wash and the dishonesty of servants, and so on and so on, of which we get more than enough in Strindberg and something too much even in Ibsen—sordid and peevish matter but not convincing; the tragedy of the world must be more final and profound than this personal disgruntlement and parochial ill-humor and pessimism, however intense at moments it may become.

The interpretation at the Provincetown Playhouse, in the hands of Mr. Robert Edmond Jones and Mr. James Light, is far different. The boy moves toward finding his world. Old Hummel spreads his nets for him; Hummel is moved to absorb, to elevate, to destroy. With the daughter of the Colonel—who is no colonel but a valet in a false guise—the young man falls in love. Despite their vileness and sins the parents leave the young people out of their foul world of crime and lies and degradation. And finally the young man cannot win even love for himself; the conception that he has is so sophomoric and confused, so rhetorical and blurred, that the ideal dies before it. He is left with meditation.

Stated thus all this means little; but the progress of its drama flows through the variations of the three scenes with something about it that is sufficiently accessible. You feel everywhere the grotesque and rough intimacy of the details and the force of Strindberg's elusive theatrical instinct. And you are constantly aware of Strindberg's essential realism, which is often the more penetrating by reason of its being so unexpected, and intangible. It holds an audience's attention by a kind of subconscious sequence of life in it and by a strange, mad veracity that, for all the disorder and poor taste and violence and mental disease, has its own unity and force.

To convey this interpretation of the play masks are used on various characters, and there is a complete freedom in the use and dramatic variety of the lighting. To the original form of play are added two devices that carry it yet farther into this particular interpretation. One of these is at the end of the second act; when Old Hummel goes into the closet and hangs himself, the figures on the stage suddenly do not exist and everything is red. And at the very end of the last scene, after his beloved is dead and the stage has grown dark, the young man turns and parts the curtains and the playing of the harp is heard as it stands before Buddha's statue there against the blue light, music and eternal contemplation—a piece of poetic and dramatic invention that in its kind outclasses anything in Strindberg's conception of the moment.

The acting in The Spook Sonata is average and rather above the average. Our four weeks' system of rehearsing and the lack of any grounding in our actors cut down the chances of secure excellence in any but realistic plays; and such a piece as this of Strindberg's, especially as it is conceived at the Provincetown Playhouse, is impossible for our actors to carry through. The thought of the director may be definite enough but the actor has little notion of what it means to convey the thought technically, to put it into his acting, to transmute it into style. No play could illustrate better than does this the necessity for a permanent company and for long and varied study of styles and technical methods. Mr. Romeyn Benjamin's work as the Colonel will serve as a good illustration. It was clear that Mr. Benjamin had either evolved or been given an idea for his part, a definite theme or key for the portrayal of the rôle. But what that theme was Mr. Benjamin had no style to convey. The same was true of Miss Matthias's Cook and Mr. Howlett's Old Hummel, which wavered constantly. On the other hand Mr. Charles Ellis showed his genuine talent in the precision with which he established the note that he was to make in the play; his first scene was one of the best things I have seen this season. Miss Mary Blair found a beautiful, unerring movement for the masked apparition of the Milk Girl. Mr. Walter Abel as the young man has in him the source of the part; he has feeling and ideal intention; the soul of the character stings and hurts him. But his technical means as yet are cramped and groping, his gestures lack form and poignancy, and his speech rhythms are slow and vague, and are lacking in stress and design. Miss Clare Eames as the Mummy did fine acting throughout; she gave to a fable and symbol a kind of reality dependent on nothing outside itself. She was able technically to render a numb and timeless suffer-

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ing and long penance. And she drove what might easily have been ludicrous into a quality and power that was grotesque and dominating.

Strindberg's Spook Sonata is not a play that I care much for; but it undoubtedly remains, even with the lapse of years, an astonishing theatrical experiment in modern elements. And it is a proper and useful exercise for an experimental theatre.

STARK YOUNG.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Keynes and Alpha

SIR: Foreign Affairs, the organ of the Council on Foreign Relations, published in its September issue a lengthy criticism, over the pseudonym of Alpha, of estimates given by me in A Revision of the Treaty, of the magnitude of the French claims against Germany as presented to the Reparation Commission. This criticism was mainly based on the foolish mistake of calculating the French claims in terms of prewar prices, whereas, naturally, the actual claims as presented were worked out on the basis, approximately, of the prices current at the date of their presentation. Since, however, the criticism was widely quoted, I wrote to Foreign Affairs a brief letter for publication pointing out the mistake which their contributor had made.

The editor of Foreign Affairs in acknowledging my communication writes: "Foreign Affairs does not publish correspondence and we therefore are unable to print your brief note of October 5."

Since this is their rule, I personally cannot complain. But I venture to express the opinion (in a paper which *does* accept correspondence) that this is an unfortunate policy for an organ of such high standing appearing under such auspices as Foreign Affairs. According to their editorial Foreword "Foreign Affairs does not accept responsibility for the views expressed in any articles, signed or unsigned, which appear in its pages. What it does accept is the responsibility for giving them a chance to appear there." It would be more complete to add—"without exposure to the usual risks of contradiction and reply."

London. J. M. KEYNES.

P. S. I am informed that Alpha, in a communication to the New York Evening Post (December 7, 1923) entitled Mr. Keynes's Reparation Figures, has written: "May I repeat that the actual French claim was made up on the basis of a valuation of damage at 1914 prices and amounted to 30.6 milliard gold francs, 1914 value, i. e. 24.8 milliard gold marks." If this means that the actual French claim was for 24.8 milliard gold marks, it is not true. If it means anything else, it is calculated to deceive the reader.

"The Rising Tide of British Labor"

SIR: Reading over an article on the above subject in your issue of December 19, I feel most of the remarks are fairly accurate on the results and probable outcome of our recent general election here. As regards practical politics the writer overstates the obstacles and understates the advantages of the Labor party in gaining ground. The principal obstacle to a real majority over both other parties lies in the Labor party's lack of money and above all lack of effective journal and press. On the other hand at this election it had the enormous advantage of a two million mass of unemployed making about five million with "dependents," and also of a lack of decent human habitations.

The "possessing classes" have merely played with both these solid advertisements of the inefficiency of private capitalism to deal with anything outside its own interests. The increasing disgust at these results caused hundreds of thousands to vote the Labor ticket. The issue of a practical Labor party will rise in Britain only when Conservatives and Liberals join against the Labor party and the Labor party is driven to examine and expose our conventional and legalized notions as to who should possess socially produced wealth in distinction to who should possess individually and personally produced wealth. When the Labor party starts in on this job it does not require a study of abstruse Marxism to see that the issue must become one of socialism claiming a big percentage of what we conventionally regard as "private property." When the issue is joined the Labor party must obtain control because we cannot fool all the people all the time.

What strikes us over here is the curious phenomenon that conventional and unreal notions about the production and ownership of socially produced wealth seem to govern not merely millionaires in the United States but also the official labor leaders, and that no real independent Labor party exists in your benighted land. Mr. Gompers's idea on the radical issue involved seem to us fossilized remains of the "Pre-Labor Age."

Edinburgh. P. MCOMISH DOTT.

The German Round Robin

SIR: In a recent number of the friendly New York Nation, critical reference is made to "the ninety German intellectuals who insisted on the legality of the seizure of Belgium." In the New Republic of November 28, I read "What about the famous round robin of the German scientists, exculpating Germany from the guilt of bringing on the war? We were taught by the Allied propaganda to regard it as evidence of Teutonic untruthfulness. Was it really that or was it rather only a manifestation of 'temperament?' " Partly both, no doubt, but mostly neither. In any event, the actual facts are worth repeating, for the fourth time at least, having been for more than six years accessible to the forgetful public.

As you no doubt remember, this "round robin" made six assertions, each beginning with the phrase, "Es ist nicht wahr." These were in substance as follows:

1. It is not true that Germany is to blame for this war.
2. It is not true that we have violated the neutrality of Belgium.
3. It is not true that the life or property of any single Belgian citizen was harmed save in the bitterest defensive need.
4. It is not true that our soldiers were brutal at Louvain.
5. It is not true that our conduct of war has been contrary to law.
6. It is not true that the war against our so-called militarism is not a war against our Kultur.

The inside history of this pronouncement, as derived from German sources, is given in my Days of a Man (II, pp. 655-659).

From a personal letter from Dr. Arnold Klebs, it appears that Dr. Ludwig Fulda of Frankfort, then in New York, saw with growing alarm that public opinion in this country was turning rapidly against Germany. Returning home, he declared to Ehrlich, the great pharmacologist, that "some energetic expression of indignation by the leading German intellectuals was needed to counteract the vicious propaganda against German culture, especially in America." To this Ehrlich assented, but he afterward said that "silence would have served the purpose better."

"Dr. Hans Wehberg of Düsseldorf, one of the highest authorities on International Law, published in the Berliner Tageblatt, October 27, 1918, an analysis of the current feeling of many of the signers of the unfortunate document. Fifteen of them were no longer living; twenty-three could not be heard from; sixteen still held the same views. One of these last (Von Duhn) 'had gone over the document sentence by sentence and would not change a word.' The remaining thirty-nine took a very different attitude. Dr. Wilhelm Förster never gave permission to use his name; Dr. Schmidlin claimed 'never to have seen the senseless and luckless manifesto.' Most of the signers did not see the document and assented by telegraph without clear understanding of its contents save that it had been 'approved by Drs. Harnack and Nernst.' Some repudiated it as soon as it appeared. Eight 'would not have signed had they understood what it was.' Still others 'would have denounced it had the crimes in Belgium been known to them at the time.' Thirty-nine stated that they could 'not now stand for the assertions made.' Speaking for the majority, Dr. Herbert Eulenberg said: 'For four weeks, though with misgivings, we all believed that Germany had exercised only her sacred right of defence. On that ground alone we then supported our military group.' A short time afterward, by way of partial atonement, sixty-eight other 'professors and statesmen of Germany' issued their manifesto, asserting the nation's good intentions but warning the people of dangers ahead. Among other things they stated that 'Germany entered the war with no thought of conquest . . . but measures must now be taken which shall not lead to conquest in any form.' "

DAVID STARR JORDAN.

Stanford University, California.

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War and the Younger Generation

SIR: America is full enough today of maundering good intentions, of platitudinous pacifism, half-hearted peace plans, and a nebulous opinion that war is awfully naughty and something ought to be done about it. The consensus seems to be that war is abominable in the abstract but consecrate in the concrete. What *is* to be done about it? The first intelligent and effective answer comes from a minority group of delegates to the Quadrennial Convention of the Student Volunteers, at Indianapolis. These young men, with disconcerting directness, solemnly pledge themselves not to aid, directly or indirectly, in the prosecution of any future war.

The suggestion has a simplicity which stuns one, and may well spread consternation in the ranks of those superannuated ones among whom, youth is ungenerously beginning to suspect, militarism recruits its staunchest adherents. The ancient recipe for rabbit stew reads, "First catch your rabbit." If the three million American boys who heretofore have been singularly susceptible to the baldest appeals, should hereafter decline to be "caught," there would be no more wars—obviously.

Brigadier General John Ross Delafield is helping the Volunteers delightfully, giving them invaluable publicity and the sincerest recommendation, by broadcasting his denunciation of them as "traitors" and "conspirators," together with some delicious references to the classic misery of Benedict Arnold.

It is interesting to note, in its bearing on this usual pathetic argument for "preparedness," that our own military authorities are pretty well agreed that future war will be so immediately and unthinkably destructive that a "war of defence" (the shibboleth of the patriot party) will be a sheer impossibility, save as a senseless campaign of retaliation.

For all that, the pledge may of course be easily condemned as a virtual repudiation of allegiance. However, the situation is one which calls for impressive action. Our own government has shown itself only too ready to abrogate the ordinary guarantees of popular rule where war and peace are concerned.

The pledge of these awe-inspiring youngsters is not just an impudent defiance, at any rate. The sacrifice which the young men are called upon to make in time of war is unique, and they are entitled to a unique hearing. The power of the majority admittedly has its limits, and these limits should preclude the enforced expenditure of the lives of a minority class to protect merely the pride and property of the many.

Furthermore—though it is an almost uncivilized suggestion!—this may prove a healthy reminder to jingoes and brigadier generals that, after all, the country does quite literally belong to those strong enough to defend it, that is, to the young; and youth today is not of a temper to be lenient in the exercise of its powers against age-hallowed superstitions and their high priests.

Perhaps we are going to see a new revolt of the already precocious "younger generation," to dethrone that last and most horrid idol of the oldsters—belligerent patriotism. Our young women are still celebrating the winning of their freedom and the control of their own bodies. It is conceivable that the young men can do as well.

DONALD C. WILLIAMS.

Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Feeding the Children of Germany

SIR: I was given an invitation by the Quakers' Relief Committee in Berlin to see some of their relief work done.

Today I saw over 1,000 children get their Christmas dinner, which consisted of rice soup with meat, a loaf of bread and a couple of yards of linen goods to take home. The children brought their own plates or little pails to eat from and after they had had second or third helpings, took the rest home.

It is horrible to see those starving children. Children twelve or thirteen years old have the bodies of a normal child of eight or nine years. It is plain to be seen that they have been suffering from starvation for a long time. I saw one child stumble and fall to the floor, too weak to carry her little pail of soup to the table. Mothers stood anxiously waiting to take their children home, each child carrying a loaf of bread, two yards of linen and the remaining soup in a little pail.

The mayor and others spoke with great gratitude of the people of the United States for feeding those children. The latter despite their feebleness cheered and cheered. In their hearts will forever remain a warm spot for the people of the United States.

JOHN VAN NULAND.

Berlin.

[The address of the Quaker relief Organization, the American Committee for Relief of German Children, is 25 West Forty-fifth Street, New York City.—THE EDITORS.]

"American Artists"

SIR: For fair play's sake, please allow me to protest against the type of criticism presented in Mr. Boughton's review of Mr. Cortissoz's book, American Artists. In general, creative artists consider such reviews wholly negligible. I do not find them so. My observation has been that multitudes of us still bow before the printed word, especially when that word concerns something outside our own experience, but not outside our interest. Probably many persons interested but not experienced in matters of art will pore over the names that Mr. Boughton, in proffered correction of Mr. Cortissoz, puts forward as those of "the most vital of contemporary American painters." Whether the hungry sheep will be fed in such pasturage is another story.

Unintentionally, no doubt, but none the less actually, Mr. Boughton misleads the public when he says of Mr. Cortissoz's book that "its direct connection with art and artists is more than dubious." It is fair to suppose that your reviewer would not have allowed himself to make a statement so contrary to fact had he not first allowed his review to deliquesce into propaganda for so-called "modernism," a term as unsatisfactory to me as to Mr. Boughton.

The author of American Artists may fairly be called a unique figure in our letters. Few if any of our critics of art have brought to the day's work, year in, year out, such wealth of mind as is his by native gift, by broad and unremitting study, by travel, and by fortunate personal contacts with men of creative power in architecture, sculpture, and painting. If there be any one critic who really knows more than Mr. Cortissoz about these three arts, lead us to him, or her. All we ask is the best. Clearly, Mr. Cortissoz needs no champion. I am defending not a person, but a principle: the principle that valid criticism, even in the minor form of the book review, must be something over and above an exposition of the critic's prejudices, interesting though these may be. The book in question is emphatically not the inept performance Mr. Boughton's review would have the public suppose.

ADELINE ADAMS.

Mr. Sinclair's Sources

SIR: May I express my appreciation of Mr. John F. Sinclair's article, Is France Going Bankrupt? which appears in your issue of January 9? With its clear analysis, lack of divergence from the main argument, and skill in the presentation of unwieldy figures, it is more than worthy of a place in a financial publication. Its appearance in the New Republic makes it possible to speculate with fewer unknown quantities on the political future of Europe; for no doubt it will crystallize in the minds of your readers, what had before been merely their *impressions* of a series of separately published and discontinuous facts concerning French finance.

But let me make a suggestion. Is it impossible in a "journal of opinion," to give as notes at the foot of each column, references to the source of directly or indirectly quoted material? For me Mr. Sinclair's article would be much more authoritative if I knew on what sort of foundations he built his very plausible framework. In the scientific journals full references are always given. The hasty or mildly interested reader skips them entirely, but to the research worker they are frequently an invaluable aid.

THEODORE M. SWITZ.

East Orange, New Jersey.

[The figures used by Mr. John F. Sinclair in his article entitled Is France Going Bankrupt? were, to a large extent, the result of a personal investigation on his own part into French State finance.—THE EDITORS.]

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Standard Oil on Troubled Waters

The Personal Relation in Industry, by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. New York: Boni and Liveright. $1.75.

MR. JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR., believes that Labor and Capital are partners, and should act accordingly. This rather novel point of view prepares the reader for a certain wildness of opinion, and he is rewarded, for Mr. Rockefeller also believes that "honesty *is* the best policy," that you should "do as you would be done by," and that "the industrial problem is a great human problem."

If you have already guessed that Mr. Rockefeller is a well-meaning man, you are not far from right. For indeed his book is a masterpiece of good intention, pure and unalloyed by the baser metal of thought. He wants everybody to be happy. Labor must have a square deal, and representation, for Mr. Rockefeller quotes an expert who told him that what employees really sought was "not higher wages, but recognition as men." And "the interests of Capital can no more be neglected than those of Labor." This can easily be arranged, since, unlike Labor, the stockholders desire other things more than "recognition as men." Management must also have its share, and the community has a stake in industry which cannot be overlooked. Every one of these four must get what he justly wants. How is this to be accomplished? How are we to arrive at that happy state when industry will be a Christmas tree on which Capital, Management, the Community and Labor will find hung their respective presents—dividends, a certificate of humanity, a salary check and a revised price list?

Mr. Rockefeller, who is saddened by the spectacle of things as they are, chiefly the ill-feeling between Capital and Labor, is filled with a double nostalgia for things as they used to be and as they might be again. He recalls with melancholy pleasure the good old days when "industry was on a small scale, when the employer came into direct contact with his employees, and the personal sympathy which grew out of that contact made the rough places smooth." But those times when boss and workman called each other "by their first names" are gone forever, they have given way to large factories in which the personal touch is quite lacking, they have been replaced by conditions such as force Mr. Rockefeller to admit that "organized Capital sometimes conducts itself in an unworthy manner, contrary to law. . . ." This is all wrong, of course, but Mr. Rockefeller sees light ahead. "Surely a way out of the impenetrable maze will be found. . . . Today the world is passing through a period of reconstruction. . . . Partnership, not enmity, is the watchword. . . . Hostility between Labor and Capital is unthinkable. . . . Who, then, will dare to block the wheels of progress?"

There seem to be no candidates for this unpopular post, so Mr. Rockefeller recounts the few, large and simple things necessary for a return to the friendly days of "I'm your boss—call me Bill." Among them are "a recognition of the brotherhood of man," of the principle of trying to put yourself in the other man's place," the spirits of "cooperation and goodwill," of "community," of "justice, fair play, and brotherhood." In industry let the same rules "prevail as in a boxing bout, in a match of golf, or a football game"; "let the contest be clean, gentlemanly, sportsmanlike, a contest always having regard for the rights of the other man."

Against this general philosophic background Mr. Rockefeller erects a more specific program of reconstruction for industry.

> If we look into our own experience, we find that the misunderstandings which we have had with other men have been largely the result of lack of contact. We have not seen eye to eye.
>
> Men cannot sit around a table together for a few hours or several days perhaps and talk about matters of common interest, with points of view however diverse, with whatever of misunderstanding or distrust, without coming to see that after all there is much of good in the worst of us and not so much of bad in most of us as the rest of us have sometimes assumed.

The above conclusions were arrived at by Mr. Rockefeller after considerable thought, and at the end of some years. What aroused his attention appears chiefly to have been the strike by the employees of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, the chief features of which will be recalled to most people by the word Ludlow. In regard to this strike Mr. Rockefeller uses terms which are, from him, scathing.

> I frankly confess that I felt there was something fundamentally wrong in a condition of affairs which made possible the loss of human lives, engendered hatred and bitterness and brought suffering and privation upon hundreds of human beings. . . . It became evident to those responsible for the management . . . that matters could not be allowed to remain as they were. Any situation . . . out of which so much bitterness could grow, clearly required amelioration. . . .

Out of this doubt that everything was all right in Colorado grew the representation plan for employees, the details of which as put on paper Mr. Rockefeller explains at length, but of whose operation in practice he says nothing.

Before the plan was put into effect, Mr. Rockefeller made a tour of the company's property. It was intimate, affectionate, and democratic. These traits he lays at the door of "my sainted mother and my honored father, whose training and example I regard as a priceless heritage," and who is not seldom seen "returning home in his automobile with half-a-dozen or a dozen Italian and Hungarian workingmen crowded about him on the seats and standing on the running boards as he gives them a lift on their way home."

Of course his tour was a success:

> If you will pardon a personal reference, may I say that when I visited Colorado some eighteen months ago, I had the opportunity of talking with hundreds, if not thousands, of the employees. . . . I went into the men's homes, talked with their wives and husbands, . . . and had just such friendly relations with them as any man going among them would have had. . . . I inquired specifically about the water supply at each camp. . . . I asked what opportunities you men, my partners [this from an address to the employees] had for getting together socially, and I visited some of your clubhouses and saw plans for others. I went into your wash houses and talked with the men before and after bathing. . . . As you know, we have pretty nearly slept together—it has been reported that I slept in one of your nightshirts—I would have been proud had the report been true.

Mr. Rockefeller is a sure-enough Christian. But it is a crippled Christianity that has all heart and no head.

ROBERT LITTELL.

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Africa at the Peace Conference

African Questions at the Peace Conference, by George Louis Beer, Edited by Louis Herbert Gray. New York: The Macmillan Company. $6.00.

MR. GEORGE LOUIS BEER was one of the most remarkable—perhaps the most remarkable—of the able and devoted body of advisers whom President Wilson brought over with him to Paris in 1918-19. Already known for his five volumes of authoritative historical work on the British Colonial System, and for a suggestive book on the English-speaking Peoples, published during the war, he was asked to undertake the study of colonial questions in Colonel House's Inquiry, and later appointed Chief of the Colonial Division of the American delegation at Paris. There his influence extended far beyond the bounds of his own subject. His wide knowledge, his scrupulous exactitude, and his unselfish accessibility, not only made him known to a wide circle, but helped to maintain the standard of discussion on the plane of true scholarship. He was designated the first Secretary of the Permanent Mandates Commission; but his work had overtaxed him, and he died at New York in March, 1920, at the age of forty-eight.

This volume, edited and brought up to date by a colleague, contains the papers on African and one or two other territorial questions prepared by him for the Peace Conference. They are of interest to British readers for numerous reasons. It is true that, unlike some of the other American inside publications regarding the Peace Conference, they are not sensational. Mr. Baruch gave us the Smuts Memorandum, which belonged, we have been told, to the most secret category of documents. Mr. Lamont gave us the unforgettable picture of the interview between the President and his economic advisers after he had yielded on the pensions clause. Mr. Bullitt told us of his Russian mission and of his disowning by the British Premier on his return. Mr. Lansing astounded us by revealing his complete lack of touch with his chief on the principles and proposals of the Covenant. Mr. Ray Stannard Baker, with all the President's documents at his command, has let light, sometimes even more than he suspects, into innumerable dark corners. Side by side with these "revelations" Mr. Beer's admirably compiled and documented memoranda may seem of secondary interest. Yet they deserve to be read, by others than professed students, as models of clear, detailed, and impartial discussion on a host of difficult and contentious problems.

As an American, Mr. Beer approaches African questions with complete detachment; yet his studies had cured him both of facile idealism and of a predominantly commercial outlook. He loses no opportunity of advocating the Open Door, but "the vitally important side of the questions," he writes at the opening of his survey on Central Africa, "is the development of a sound African civilization; the secondary side is Africa as a source of supply to the Western world and as a market for its finished wares." He is particularly interested in the development of cultivation by native producers, and points out that neglect of this principle must have for a consequence that "many of the colonies, practically all except the British, will have to change so fundamentally as almost to begin their economic life afresh." He is also keenly interested in the relations between India and East Africa, citing Sir John Kirk's dictum that "East Africa is the America of the Hindu." In his summarized recommendations he definitely advises that German East Africa "be entrusted by mandate to the British Empire as a place of settlement for British East India," declaring it to be "essential" that "India's need of a country for unrestricted immigration be met." In another place (p. 63) he remarks, regarding Indian immigration, with as much of irony as he permitted to his most scrupulous pen, that "it is not altogether plain why the addition of German East Africa to the British colonies in this region should be necessary to its success."

On trade questions he is equally definite and outspoken. In proposing that the Cameroons should be placed under a French mandate, he stipulates as a condition to be insisted on, "if possible," "that all existing and future international agreements about equality of opportunity and freedom of navigation of rivers should apply, not only to all the Cameroons, but also to all French Equatorial and West Africa."

On the other hand, he points out that the Open Door is a formula of limited application. "Until Africa is secured from competing territorial ambitions, it would be unwise to oblige any State to open its colonies to economic penetration aimed at detaching them. Fears of such nature kept Portugal and Belgium from welcoming German capital in the past. . . . The crux of the problem is to eliminate the political motive. That effected, the difficulty will not consist in giving equal opportunities to the private capital of all nations, but in attracting it at all. This will be especially the case," he adds, "if the native is adequately protected from exploitation by effective labor laws."

Beer had never been to Tropical Africa; but he had intended to undertake regular visits to the mandated and other areas as part of his Geneva work. It will be interesting to see whether this project will materialize in other hands. In any case, the Permanent Mandates Commission has set out on its task, as its proceedings show, with the blend of high principle, prudent judgment, and pertinacious curiosity for which Beer's inquiries were undoubtedly the preparation.

The editor has added to the value of the volume by over a hundred pages of useful documentary appendices.

ALFRED E. ZIMMERN.

Our American Theatre

Our American Theatre, by Oliver M. Sayler, with Illustrations by Lucie R. Sayler. New York: Brentano's. $4.00.

HAVE you ever wondered how it would seem to read a book that was present in all its parts yet somehow absent as a whole? Such a paradoxical effect may be reached—or nearly—by the help of Mr. Sayler's latest. Perhaps this is because the book practically dispenses with historical perspective; perhaps because, though full of revolt and reform, it lays small stress on revolt *from* what and reform *of* what. Eliza skips nimbly from ice-cake to ice-cake on her way to emancipation, yet we hardly hear the bloodhounds or see the shore she has just left behind. The children of Hope stand neatly marshalled for the maw of Moloch, but Moloch himself would appear to be functioning elsewhere, or nowhere. Yet, as everybody knows, the fiery furnace of Things as They Are burns and glows nightly in the vicinity of Times Square, and the bloodhounds bay loudly along a good half-mile of Broad-

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way. Mr. Sayler concentrates on other and newer and more hopeful matters. His theme is the general amelioration of the past fifteen years; and the tough actualities of a system deeply entrenched are touched upon only in his last half-dozen pages, in a very short chapter which is mildly entitled, Economic Problems.

"Organize the theatre," Matthew Arnold once demanded. "The theatre *is* organized!" cries Mr. Sayler, at the end, in triumphant despair. With swarming associations of managers, actors, dramatists, stage-hands, musicians, bill-posters, teamsters, scrubwomen, dressers and what not —all intent on the pursuit of narrow personal interests— the wonder is that anything gets done at all: every play finally brought into being before the public eye becomes a miracle—a specious front that veils a struggling chaos of rivalries and extortions. No wonder that our author postpones this spectacle to the end, and then makes our glimpse of it as brief as possible. No wonder that he details with relish the activities of small, informal, earnest groups, with sometimes a benevolent autocrat above them. Extreme organization is easily capable of cutting both ways; and truly the history of the drama has shown worse things than a Vincent Crummles, with his boys and his pumps.

Mr. Sayler is, as I have implied, contemporaneous. Today suffices. And intensive. Just one small field. The persons and ideas within it. All under one little lens. Theatre Guild; Provincetown; Neighborhood Playhouse. Jones; Norman-Bel Geddes; Simonson. Round and round in the squirrel cage. And a diction to match. No verbs. Courte haleine. Snippy. Affected. In the long run rather irritating. Yet sometimes a happy forgetfulness of this new style, as in the chapter on the Russians, which gives matter precedence over manner, and which, if seemingly an insertion or even an intrusion, is welcome none the less. It is a good chapter, alike in substance and method, and shows how well a man can do when he is not intent on putting the language through a hoop.

Both text and illustrations lay their major stress on "Our Designers," with their gran rifiuto of "representation." Right here develops an interesting antinomy. It is relatively easy to stylize stage-settings, with a confident presentment of personal moods, even if these sometimes happen to be wilful and obscure; yet how to stylize the players and, most of all, their diction? Still, unity of production, homogeneity of effect, must be reached somehow. Hence two opposing schools of thought. Abolish the actor, says one school. Suppress the "designer," says the other. "Speech betrayeth," rejoins the artist; "let me have mutes, or masks, or marionettes." "Words are the very breath of our being," retorts the actor; "give us a background with which our words may square." An antinomy indeed! Is it not possible that the designer, like the orchestra leader, tends to become too predominant? Might not his highest, dizziest flights be slightly curtailed? Is there not a happy medium between his extremes and the dour determination of the old-time scene-builder? Why not a middle course that would stress simplification and economy by a reliance on the indicatory, avoiding an elaborate literalism on the one hand and a freakish individualism on the other?

Mr. Sayler has a few instructive, if slightly rueful pages on the mere receptivity of the American theatre-goer. Yet the passivity of the show-seeker is little compared with that of the spectator of painting, and nothing compared with that of the spectator of architecture. The drama gets more response from us than most of the other arts. Not enough, however, to satisfy Mr. Sayler. He thinks of the ready responses of our football crowds to their cheer-leaders, and wishes for a like liberation of the spirit before our various dramatic spectacles. Well, we have our pageants; and we have the informal—and sometimes imprudent—intimacies of our zanies of vaudeville and revue. He is doubtless thinking, with encouragement, of these; but he is evidently thinking more of Reinhardt and his participating audiences in Berlin. The American people is not yet fully formed, and possibly another generation may bring wonders; yet for the present, one surmises, sport will in all probability operate with a greater liberating force than art.

It might almost be wished that the author had made his title less possessive. *Our* American Theatre is flattering, doubtless; but as a possession it is almost too recent and lightly-poised to be secure, and much of its inspiration issues from abroad, rather than from home. Yet, sudden as it is, and cosmopolitan as from the current nature of things it must be, Mr. Sayler has provided a liberal allowance of the connected facts and details. Perhaps, too, there is a larger insinuation of aesthetic fundamentals than credit has been given for. And possibly even some desirable bits of a chronology broader than designed may be gathered by the intent.

HENRY B. FULLER.

The Life of Christ

Life of Christ, by Giovanni Papini. Freely translated from the Italian by Dorothy Canfield Fisher. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50 cloth. $10 morocco.

PAPINI'S Life of Christ is a book which enrages the professional scholar of the New Testament. It is written with a complete and complacent disregard of all that has been found out about the true history of Jesus by applying the ordinary methods of historical criticism to the documents which relate it. What Papini has done is to take the gospels as they stand, ignoring any questions of literary relationship or comparative value, and apparently priding himself on the fact that he does ignore them. The result is a book which is entirely devoid of any value whatever for anyone who wishes to know what the truth about Jesus really is.

Nevertheless the book has a certain attraction for those who are not interested in historical truth but rather desire to evade it by reading its skilful perversion by a man who knows how to treat ancient documents in the spirit of Italian opera and present such facts from the four gospels as please him, rewritten in a saccharinely sentimental manner so as to attract the pleasure of the uneducated intelligentsia.

Lest it may seem that this criticism of Papini is too fierce, let me quote part of his treatment of the parable of the Prodigal Son.

> But the prodigal son had no choice and was forced to lead the herd of swine out to the pasture. He was given no pay and very little to eat, because there was only a little for any one; but there was no famine for the hogs, because they could eat anything. There were plenty of carob beans and they gorged themselves on those. Their hungry attendant enviously watched the

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pink and black animals rooting in the earth, chewing beans and roots, and longed to fill his stomach with the same stuff and wept, remembering the abundance of his own home and his festivals in the great city. Sometimes overcome with hunger he took one of the black bean-husks, from under the grunting snouts of the pigs, tempering the bitterness of his suffering with that insipid and woody food. And woe to him if his employer had seen him!

Compare this with the original statement, "And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat."

Or listen to this:

Note well, you men who are yet to be born! Jesus was never willing to touch a coin with His hand. Those hands of His which molded the clay of the earth as a cure for blind eyes, those hands which touched the contaminated flesh of lepers and of the dead, those hands which clasped the body of Judas, so much more contaminated than clay, than leprosy, than putrefaction, those white pure healing hands which nothing could sully, never suffered themselves to be touched by one of those metal disks which carry in relief the profiles of the proprietors of the world. Jesus could mention money in His parables; He could see it in the hands of others, but touch it—no! To Him who scorned nothing, money was disgusting. It was repugnant to Him with a repugnance that was like horror. All His nature was in revolt at the thought of a contact with those filthy symbols of wealth.

There is not a word of historical truth in this statement. It is merely what Papini himself thinks that Jesus ought to have done, and in a way which seems to me deeply dishonest, he puts it forward as the actual word and intention of Jesus himself.

It is one of the most mournful facts for the historian to contemplate that there is such a large sale for books of this kind and so small a sale for books on the same subject which are historically correct. A hundred copies of Papini will be sold for one of any book which will tell the public soberly and sincerely what the facts really are.

Nor is this phenomenon confined entirely to religious history. It would be a safe assumption that a life of Washington or of Lincoln written in this style would have a greater sale than a book which tried to find out the true facts and recorded them in a truthful manner. Yet it was not always thus. It is an extraordinary fact that a hundred years ago Locke on The Human Understanding ran in the course of a few months through nine editions.

What chance would such a book have now of doing the same thing? Very small indeed. And what chance in those days would a book have stood of finding any sale at all if it had borne the same relation to knowledge, as it was then, as Papini does to knowledge as it is now? The truth is that the reading public of those days, whatever its defects may have been, had a far higher standard of truth in historical writing than the public of today. It is not easy to be optimistic as to the future in the face of the facts, for if men will not pursue truth in history, they are not likely to find righteousness in politics or justice in legislation. Nor can any nation or any people find salvation for itself or for others if it deliberately prefer to be deceived.

KIRSOPP LAKE.

Short Stories

Short Story Writing,—An Art or a Trade?, by N. Brylion Fagin. New York: Thomas Seltzer. $1.50.

The Best British Short Stories of 1923, by E. J. O'Brien and John Cournos. New York: Small, Maynard and Company. $2.00.

The Eighth Wonder and Other Stories, by A. S. M. Hutchinson. New York: Little, Brown and Company. $2.00.

Uncanny Stories, by May Sinclair. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

A WAIL of honest despair comes from N. B. Fagin, instructor in short-story writing, and Dean of the School of Literary Arts at Washington, D. C. His title suggests the bitterness of the votary of Art constrained by popular demand to the cult of Mammon. He is torn between his obligation to students come to learn saleable short-story writing, and the duty of fostering a national literature. He sees the fiction standards of today as utterly false and formal—the trail of O. Henry is over them all, and the movie-scenario completes the artistic demoralization. The conscientious Mr. Fagin revolts at training the neophyte in the sleight-of-hand required by rapacious magazine-editors for lifting the purse of the American public while it reads.

In defence of the rapacious magazine-editor be it said that he too has his struggle between obligation to his shareholders and responsibility (granting the unfortunate man a spark of aesthetic conscience?) for literary standards. He is bound to count votes—as revealed by the comparative circulation of magazines that give the majority what they want, and those that select what the "literary Brahmins" can enjoy,—and vote-counting does disturb our value-judgments. The American Voter may speak with the voice of God in the elections, but his aesthetic judgments, although necessarily authoritative in the land of the free, are far from divine,—as investigation of our popular fiction-periodicals will prove. The tyranny of the collective artistic judgment crushes individual value-estimates all along the line in our story-writing. Literary aspirant, instructor and editor, each with one eye on the circulation ballot-box and the other presumably in a fine frenzy rolling, produce the results one might expect from this phenomenon of artistic vision, and our short stories are moulded to the 'arts' desire of the Hundred Million.

English fiction-writers are apparently freer than ours from the incubus of rigidly commercialized standards,—perhaps because their periodicals are less showy, less popular with the populace.

We find in most of the stories collected by Messrs. O'Brien and Cournos qualities the lack of which Mr. Fagin deplores in our current fiction,—substance, simplicity, and truth. The formal short story is here—and excellent of its kind. Miss Bracegirdle Does Her Duty, by Stacy Aumonier, for example, is as skilful a bit of workmanship as one could find,—but its irony is so delicate, its humor so infectious that the story *is* "the thing,"—its beautiful finish adding to it only the polish that mahogany will take and pine will not. Such word-engravings as The Fly, by Katherine Mansfield, Stripes, by Ethel Colburn Mayne, and Old Gadgett, by Sheila Kaye-Smith might not be strictly termed "stories" at all. Another Temple Gone, a beguiling Irish incident by C. E. Montague, and The Enemy, by Hugh Walpole, are hardly more, yet are so

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truly works of art as to establish a standard of their own. Might not the short story stand in relation to literature as the etching, mezzotint, pastel, or miniature do to painting? Our inflexible standard seems to exact from all artists the work of Meissonier—narrative painting in meticulous miniature, formal and infinitely monotonous.

Mr. Hutchinson's new collection of short stories, The Eighth Wonder, might rank as a series of watercolors were not the art of the confectioner an apter comparison. Sugary pinnacles of sticky and distorted rhetoric; fiery syrup of emotional substance; rich and savory Gallic frankness (A Magdalen of the Soil), and the tang of desperate heroism (Some Talk of Alexander)—reveal the maitre-confiseur at the head of his craft.

May Sinclair cannot be accused of catering to the popular sweet-tooth in her Uncanny Stories. The best of them—Where Their Fire Is Not Quenched—is a purgatorial chromo that testifies to the progress in delineation of Eternal Torment since Dante's day. The Flaw in the Crystal is an exhaustive revelation of mystical delicacies—convincing by reason of the author's obvious sincerity. The other stories vary in quality from the crass vulgarity of The Nature of the Evidence to real imaginative merit in The Finding of the Absolute—a pungent scrap of philosophy—a cartoon of heaven. The collection is highly colored—startling rather than satisfying. Let Mr. Fagin not despair,—it is not we alone that stray after false gods! We are immature enough artistically to crave a code. Of uncertain faith, we respect ritual for its own sake, especially a fashionable ritual, ministered by gold-decked acolytes. But the obscure iconoclast will make himself heard—as he always has when possessed of the veritable gift of tongues—even above the well-drilled choristers chanting their formal responses before the altars of the Ivory Heads and the Golden Calves.

DOROTHY BACON WOOLSEY.

Gilbert's Life and Letters

W. S. Gilbert: His Life and Letters, by Sidney Dark and Rowland Grey. New York: George H. Doran. $5.00.

WORKING in admirable collusion Mr. Sidney Dark and Miss Rowland Grey present W. S. Gilbert as a latter-day saint compact of all domestic and public virtues, but let no light in upon the function of his unique art. The irascible Gilbert of tradition now must go haloed and without reproach even for the long estrangement from Sullivan. It would appear that in his lifelong twisting of the British lion's tail Gilbert was inspired only by a love of animals. His true self rested in Charity and Broken Hearts and not in Utopia, Limited, and Ruddigore. The man who in almost so few words calls policemen cowards is simply poking fun at coppers. The facts of an exemplary life are interpreted to reveal the greatest Philistine ironist of them all as no more than a public entertainer with a full sense of the value of committee meetings.

With all the very latest Gilbertiana at their disposal it seems too bad that Mr. Dark and Miss Grey should perpetuate this sort of thing. To most audiences, of course, the never-dying operas will always remain more a source of innocent merriment than a devastating commentary by a man of uncommon common sense. Bound by the enchantment of Sullivan's exquisite harmonies the Pooh-Bah in the pit fails quite to recognize his brother upon the stage. There by the wit of Gilbert goes himself: but from the advantage of his complacency he joins with zest in a dreadful game aimed straight at his own undoing. The profound unconscious humor whereby for a time representation of The Mikado was forbidden out of respect to the dead Japanese emperor itself acclaims the complete triumph of Gilbertian satire. In every turn of the dialogue and the incomparable lyrics the characters in The Mikado confess their British origin. Shaken with laughter Pooh-Bah and Pish-Tush sit with the audience agreeing that all is right as right can be in the best of all Philistine worlds.

Gilbert and Edward Lear are as far apart as Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll. Gilbert is a Swift without madness, a Voltaire without philosophy, an Aristophanes without vulgarity. In this book he is made into a conjurer blowing colored bubbles for the pure in heart! Lewis Carroll's love for children hardly prepares us for the unscrupulous crushing rejoinders visited by the March Hare and the Red Queen upon sweet Alice. So too Gilbert's private decencies don't help much to explain the cold and cynical ferocity wrought into the very structure of his most perfect lines. The realm of nonsense is an absolute one and Gilbert is perhaps its most enduring despot. King Lear enacts his inspired foolery on the heath. King Gilbert reviews court etiquette with a sinister benevolence. Lewis Carroll alone may venture near Gilbert's undisputed sway. Aristophanes is king of the underworld of politics.

The trouble is, of course, that Gilbert and Sullivan are one and indivisible. Yet whatever his delightful parodies of Italian opera and other established harmonies Sullivan is always an angel of light. Gilbert turns the corrupt sources of innocent merriment into a joyous drama of Philistine diabolism. There is none like him, none. In all art there is nothing quite so irresistible as Iolanthe, The Pirates of Penzance, The Gondoliers, and Ruddigore. In every instance the Major-General, the Peers, Pooh-Bah, Dick Deadeye and the other immortals parade their arrogance, cowardice, greed, knavery, and egotism, yet so appareled in inextinguishable grace and laughter, that we all emerge scatheless and unrepentant from an unsparing savagery of attack upon our common average Philistinism.

A. DONALD DOUGLAS.

Contributors

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